

PASTORAL CARE OF BATTERED WOMEN

A professional project
presented to the faculty of the
School of Theology at Claremont
In partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree
Doctor of Ministry

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
Importance of the Problem	1
Focus of the Problem	4
Limitation of This Project	6
Definition of Major Terms	7
Outline of Chapters	8
CHAPTER 1: THE BATTERED WOMAN IN THE CULTURAL CONTEXT. .	12
Wife Beating as a Social Problem	12
Patriarchy	14
Sexism	20
Violence as a Way of Life	22
Other Factors that Affect the Extent of Violence. .	25
Institutional Resources	26
Future Hopes for the Culture	29
CHAPTER 2: THE PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSION OF BATTERING . .	35
Learned Helplessness	36
The Cycle Theory of Violence	40
The Profile of the Battering Couple	47
The Childhood Homes of the Women and Her Batterer .	48
Self-Esteem	50
Jealousy	51
Traditional Roles	52
Stress	53
Blame and Guilt	54
Sexual Relationship	55
The Batterer's Dual Personality	55
Economics	56
Psychological Battering	58
Possibilities for Therapy	59
CHAPTER 3: THEOLOGICAL ISSUES RELATED TO BATTERING . . .	74
Biblical Interpretation	75
The Maleness of God	87
The Son as Suffering Servant	91
Guilt, Forgiveness, Repentance, and Reconciliation. .	94
Marriage and Divorce	100
CHAPTER 4: PASTORAL CARE OF THE BATTERED WOMAN	109
Self-Preparation of the Pastor	110
Consciousness Raising for the Whole Church	113
Outreach and Mission	118

Direct Support for Women	118
Counseling the Battered Woman	123
Crisis Counseling	130
Guidelines for Couple Counseling	131
Pastoral Care for Psychologically Abused Women	136
Pastoral Care for Batterers and Abusers	139
Dealing with Belief Systems	141
SUMMARY: THE EXODUS JOURNEY	146
APPENDIX	147
A. Feminist and Liberation Resources	148
B. Resources	149
C. Worship Aids	151
BIBLIOGRAPHY	154

ABSTRACT

The awareness of the social problem of wife-beating and the greater willingness on the part of battered women to seek help has brought a challenge to the church. Pastoral Care of Battered Women is directed toward the pastor in a church context. It is a manual for pastors giving concrete suggestions as to how they can minister to the particular needs of battered women using the insights gained from knowing more about the influences that help to keep a battered woman trapped in her situation. How the sociological structures of patriarchy and sexism and the cultural approval of violence contribute to the existence and support of wife beating are discussed. The psychological dimensions of battering that are presented are the cycle theory of battering, the battering couple as individuals and as a couple, and the possibilities of therapy. The theological discussion centers around biblical interpretation, the image of God, suffering, guilt and forgiveness, and the institution of marriage. A critique of views that help entrap a battered women are discussed and also views that work for her liberation. With this three-pronged background, a practical chapter with case-like illustrations lays out ideas for pastoral care in the church setting. The care is described in terms of prevention and education as well as in terms of treatment during crises or after a woman has been battered. The pastor can use these

ideas in his/her own contact with a battered woman, and also in enabling and training lay women to be working with and caring for battered women. The manual covers such topics as counseling a battered woman, preventative education for individuals and couples, crisis counseling, pastoral care for psychologically abused woman and for batterers, and developing lay people who are able to give care. Three appendices point a pastor toward resources for worship and toward organizations and manuals that give information related to battered women and their situations.

INTRODUCTION

Importance of the Problem

The battered woman lives in fear. She never knows when her husband will punch her in the face for wearing the "wrong " make up, slap her for fixing a casserole instead of chicken for dinner, beat her for having a different view about politics, or threaten her because he had a bad day. She has tried to get help from pastor, doctor, police, and friend, but all of them have found a way to blame her and vindicate her husband. She has no place to go with her three small children.

The number of battered women in the United States is unknown. Several researchers have tried to discover how many woman are living in battering relationships. Their discoveries indicate a very large number. A 1976 survey indicated that almost 2 million or about one out of every twenty-six American wives (3.8%) gets beaten by her husband every year.¹ If you consider the entire lifetime of the marriage, then 27% of husbands were violent to their wives.² The researchers indicate that this figure is low for three reasons. First, there are some people who underrate the violence in the family. They may not consider a slap to be violence. Second, there are some who fail to report extreme acts of violence because of shame or guilt. Third, divorced couples, where there often is excessive

violence, were not sampled.³ Because of these factors these researchers place the true rate at closer to 50 to 60 percent.⁴ A New York attorney reports that of 500 women she represented in divorce actions in Brooklyn in 1976, 57.4% complained of physical assaults by their husbands.⁵

Diana Russell, in Rape in Marriage, reports a 21% rate of wife-beating in her survey. She also reports the results of the most recent study done by Irene Frieze in 1980. Using self-reported battered women and a matching control group, Frieze discovered that 34% of the women had experienced violence from their husbands in their marriages.⁶ Although these samplings of surveys come u with different results, the studies do reveal a large number of battered women therefore indicating a serious social problem.

Although wife-beating has been with us for centuries, it has been kept behind closed doors in the sanctity of the family. The recognition of wife abuse as a family and social problem came as a consequence of the women's movement and the establishment of shelters for battered women in the late 1960's and 70's. By 1980 laws were being rewritten and research in prevention and treatment programs was being initiated.⁷

Lenore Walker explodes some of the myths we have had about battered women. Battering is not a phenomenon only of the poor, the criminal, or the psychotic. Battering is

found in all socio-economic classes, all religious groups, and in families that would appear "normal".⁸ Battered women are in our churches hidden behind dark glasses and long sleeves with wounded egos and damaged self-esteem.

As more and more women are risking getting help for their abusive situations, many will turn to their pastors for help. These pastors need to be able to understand the situations of the women and the factors that brought them there. They need to understand the nature of the violent relationship and what keeps the victim in it. These pastors need to develop knowledge and skills to help women build their damaged self-esteem and overcome the effects of the violence done to them.

The battered woman may be part of a family composed of spouse and children. Family therapy and marriage counseling have shown us that the family and the marital dyad are systems that work as units. Pastors need to understand more about the patterns and dynamics of violence in the family and marriage so we can find effective ways of confronting it and of bringing the couple and family to a new way of relating that is mutually supportive, redemptive, and whole.

There are cultural and religious images of marriage, sex roles, and family life that encourage women to stay in the battering situation. Pastors need to be aware of these images so that they do not continue to reinforce them in

counseling. They need to put forth new images of personhood and marriage that are redemptive and liberating. The marriage needs to be transformed from one of abuse and violence to one of peace, justice, and mercy.

Focus of the Problem

The behavior I am focusing on in this paper is the act of a husband battering his wife. Batter means "to beat with successive blows so as to bruise, shatter, or demolish; to strike heavily and repeatedly."⁹ It is important to determine who is responsible for the specific act of violence. Although the woman may contribute to the poor communication in the marriage, or may remain in the relationship after her husband has beat her therefore implicitly giving permission for him to hit her again, she does not cause him to hit her. The woman may appear to "provoke," she may be unpleasant and act badly, she may be a "bitch," but she is still not responsible for his act of violence. No one deserves to be beaten.

In some states it is against the law for a teacher to hit a student. No matter how rebellious, obnoxious, obstreperous, or unmanageable the child may be, the law declares that the teacher may not hit the child. The teacher is responsible for finding ways to deal with the child that are not violent. The court in this case will not consider any excuses of the teacher about the extenuating

circumstances that may have "made" him/her hit the child. The fact is the teacher may not hit the child under any circumstance.

We as a society have not yet come to the place where we declare unequivocally that a man may not hit his wife under any circumstances. The recent changes in the law making wife-battery illegal indicate a movement in that direction. We still need to have changes in attitude that will make it possible for police, attorneys, judges, social workers, and ministers to play their part in stopping the approval of wife beating. I am stating in this paper that in no circumstance is a man justified in hitting his wife. That does not mean that the wife should not make changes in her behavior. It only means that she is not responsible for his act of hitting. For the marriage to be repaired, the hitting must stop. Then both the husband and the wife can work together to build a better marriage.

Psychological battering is related to and accompanies physical battering but is much more illusive because there is no direct physical impact. Application of the dynamics of physical battering may be applied to psychological battering. There is still no excuse for the psychological attack.

In viewing the woman as victim in the battering incident, we are changing from the long-time view of woman as instigator of the violence against her. We still have

the old view with us in thoughts and statements as: "What did you do to provoke him?": "She deserved it!": "Why does she stay? She must get something out of it." I am not saying that the woman is innocent or should be self-righteous in the situation. I am emphasizing woman as victim to effect a change in perception about the beaten woman's role.

Limitation of This Project

The subject of domestic violence covers such issues as spouse abuse, battered women, child abuse, incest, marital rape, and parent abuse. I am choosing to focus specifically on pastoral care of battered women for three reasons. First, it is usually the woman who is a victim who seeks help from her pastor. Second, many times the male batterer is resistant to joining his wife or partner in seeking help, so that the pastor is limited to working with the woman. Third, if the woman is helped in her battering situation, the children, who may be experiencing abuse by the woman and/or her batterer, will be helped.

Although husbands can be the recipients of violence by wives, I have chosen to focus on wives as victims of violence by their husbands for several reasons which are documented by studies done in the field.

1. Much of a wife's violence toward her husband is a response to his violence. She is protecting herself or retaliating in violence after sometimes years of violence done to her.

2. Abuse by husbands does more damage than a wife's violence toward her husband. The man's greater physical strength makes it likely that a woman will be more seriously injured when beaten by her husband.
3. Husbands have higher rates of using the most dangerous weapons such as knives and guns.
4. When violent acts are committed by a husband, they are repeated more often than is the case for wives.
5. A large number of violent attacks by husbands occur when the wife is pregnant, making a danger for the unborn child.
6. In a traditional marriage the wife is more bound economically and socially to the marriage. If she has children she is doubly bound, since in this kind of marriage, the wife is the primary care giver of children.¹⁰

Traditional ideology and patriarchal values support the existence of wife-beating. The church has tended to allow patriarchal myths and values to influence its theology. We, as pastors, need to challenge our theology to make it liberating for all, rather than oppressive to some. We need to develop practical ways to help women who are caught in battering situations. So, the church needs to accept its responsibility to recognize and intervene in the growing awareness of wife abuse.

Definition of Major Terms

Many of the terms used in the paper may have ambiguous meanings as they have been used by the press and the media. Therefore, I am including several definitions of terms to clarify what I mean by the terms.

Battered Woman:

A battered woman is a woman who is repeatedly subjected to any forceful physical or psychological behavior by a man in order to coerce her to do something he wants her

to do without any concern for her rights. Battered women include wives or women in any form of intimate relationships with men. Furthermore, in order to be classified as a battered woman, the couple must go through the battering cycle at least twice.¹¹

Feminism:

An ideological commitment to the legal, economic, and social equality of the sexes. It does not seek to replace male supremacy with female supremacy or patriarchy with matriarchy. Rather, a feminist is any person, female or male, who envisions and works towards equal rights, opportunity, and human dignity.¹²

Patriarchy:

Patriarchy ... is a social organization headed by the father and recognizing the male line of descent. In the larger political sense, that is, wherever power relationships are involved, patriarchy is any system that runs on a hierarchal principle with the "top man" invested with absolute power over those under him.¹³

Sexism:

Sexism is bias, prejudice, or discrimination based on gender, ... a sexist has preconceptions about female human beings - usually negative generalizations regarding their inferiority to male human beings. Because sexism, ... is a deeply entrenched, often unconscious cultural attitude, many of us are unaware that we may be classifying someone's temperament, capabilities, or interests according to stereotyped expectations of what women and men or girls and boys are like.¹⁴

Outline of Chapters

The first chapter will deal with the cultural context and the sociological setting of family violence. The major work in this field is done by Murray Straus, Richard Gelles, and Susan Steinmetz.¹⁵ We will be looking at the influences of the culture on family violence and how our cultural beliefs perpetuate this violence. We

will be seeing how these beliefs about marriage and family help to keep a woman in the battering situation.

The second chapter will discuss the psychological dynamics of the battering couple. The work of Lenore Walker is basic to understanding the woman as victim. She has developed the theory of the three-stage cycle of violence based on the learned helplessness dynamic. The field of family therapy gives us some insights into the dynamics of family violence. Some of the assumptions and practices of family therapy work to keep the woman in the battering situation. Feminist therapy, however, teaches us ways to empower a woman to extricate herself from a battering cycle.

The third chapter will deal with the theological aspects of counseling the battered women. The theological beliefs and assumptions are very important because the pastor is working from a theological base. First we will deal with destructive theologies that work to perpetuate the battering situation and to keep the woman in this cycle. Then we will look at new theologies and beliefs that liberate, empower and transform.

The fourth chapter will suggest practical ways a pastor can help a battered woman who seeks counsel. The project will also suggest ways the church as a whole can help those women in the church and ways the church can raise the consciousness of all the members to this

important issue of battered women. This insight can lead the church into an awareness of the whole problem of domestic violence. Resources will be given for the pastor and the church that will be helpful in the task of dealing with the issue of battered women.

END NOTES

1. Murray Straus, Richard J. Gelles, and Suzanne K. Steinmetz. Behind Closed Doors: Violence in the American Family (Garden City, NY: Anchor/Doubleday, 1981) 40.
2. Ibid., 37.
3. Ibid., 35.
4. Ibid., 36.
5. Lenore Walker, The Battered Women (New York: Harper & Row, 1979) 19.
6. Diana Russell, Rape in Marriage (New York: Macmillan, 1982) 96-101.
7. Straus et al., 10,11.
8. Walker, 20-30.
9. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1983) 135.
10. Straus et al., 43,44.
11. Walker, xv.
12. Letty Cottim Pogrebin, Growing Up Free: Raising Your Child in the 80's (New York: Harper & Row, 1979) x.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Straus et al.

CHAPTER 1: THE BATTERED WOMAN IN THE CULTURAL CONTEXT

Wife Beating as a Social Problem

Wife battering did not become widely recognized as a social problem in American life until the late 1970's. This recognition came as a result of the women's movement. In the late 1960's when women began to meet together in groups to discuss women's issues and support each other, they discovered a common problem of violence in their families. Women who thought they were the only ones who were being beaten and who believed that they "deserved" it or "asked for it" found that there were many others with similar experiences and feelings.

Finally, by the mid-seventies the National Organization of Women (NOW) decided to make battered wives a priority issue. It was in 1976 that women's groups across the United States began a political effort to establish better social services for battered wives. They began to force changes in laws which denied women adequate legal redress from being beaten by their husbands. And in 1977 Del Martin published her important book, Battered Wives, the first major book on wife abuse.¹

Neighborhood centers for women grew out of the women's movement in England. One such center led to the first "shelter" or "safe house" for abused wives. Erin Pizzey was founder of the women's center which became the

world's first battered-wife refuge. Pizzey recorded the account in Scream Quietly or the Neighbors Will Hear, written in 1974.²

The beginnings of shelters for abused women in the United States came from a grass-roots movement which was initiated and fueled by women. The shelters began and existed on limited funds and shoestring budgets. Many of these shelters are operated by women who have been abused themselves and have been able to successfully extricate themselves from their battering relationships. These women are able in turn to help other women overcome their battering situations. The shelters also make provisions for the children of women who come for help.

Women who are abused by their husbands are found in all socio-economic classes, at all educational levels, and in all religious groups.³ It is true that the poor, the uneducated, and the non-religious have higher rates of violence.⁴ We have the impression that wife-battering is greater among persons of the lower socio-economic classes because they are the ones who go to shelters and get involved with the police where there would be a record of their abuse. The poor have fewer resources than the middle and upper classes, but no group is immune from the problem of wife battering.

We are in a period of great change in our society. The civil-rights movement of the 1960's, the recognition of

child abuse, the peace movement, the women's movement, and the recognition of the extent of domestic violence have all been factors in moving us in the direction of shifting our values toward recognizing the rights of all persons regardless of race, sex, age, or nationality. This value of the rights of particular groups challenges some of our cultural myths and beliefs.

We have discovered that the phenomenon of wife-beating has existed and continues to be resistant to change because there are some very strong cultural myths and images that support it. To change the practice of wife-beating we must change the basic myths. We begin by naming them and calling them into question: patriarchy, sexism, and violence as a way of life.

Patriarchy

When we look at the extent and pervasiveness of wife abuse, we must conclude that it is not just a problem of marital mis-adjustment or intrapsychic maladjustment of a few. Social scientists and psychologists working in the field of battered women are in agreement in their view of patriarchy and its effect on wife abuse. Pagelow states:

These writers have generally singled out as the starting point for a theory of wife abuse the patriarchal foundations of the family itself and the hierarchical power structure that provides the framework of modern social systems.⁴

Terry Davidson gives an excellent short account of

wife-beating as it recurs throughout patriarchal history.

In pre-patriarchal history women were revered for their ability to give birth. Davidson evaluates the beginnings of patriarchy:

Once man realized the significance of his participation in coitus, however, man's religious status gradually changed as a woman's status gradually became debased. As a man became the Patriarch, society did an about-face toward a repressive mode of living.⁶

Dobash and Dobash did studies which were completed in 1979. They conclude that the hierarchal structure of the patriarchal family has legitimized wife-beating for subordination, domination, and control of women. The institutions of the church and state supported the patriarchal tradition and resisted any change in the status of women that came from such reformers as Abigail Adams, John Stuart Mills and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. The cultural belief was that man had the right to dominate and control women and that women were by their nature subservient to men.⁷

A part of Pagelow's hypothesis in her study (1976) of battered women was that the more intensely a woman believed traditional ideology, the more likely she was to remain in relationship with her batterer and the less likely she would be to act in such a way as to significantly alter her situation in a positive way.⁸ Pagelow defines "traditional ideology:"

Traditional ideology encompasses a broad range of internalized beliefs favoring acceptance of the

rightness of the patriarchal-hierarchical order of the social structure. It is a set of beliefs and attitudes that is a fundamental part of the way persons evaluate life and circumstances and serves to guide and motivate behavior. Traditional ideology is the configuration of all the conservative wisdom passed down through the ages as the inherent "natural" order of things.⁹

Pagelow wonders why it is that shelters are having such a hard time being established and funded and why there is such a resistance to helping a battered woman. She concludes that it is because the availability of a safe place for a woman to escape from her violent marriage is threatening two of our basic institutions - marriage and the family.¹⁰ Davidson quoted an attorney who was with a shelter group as saying,

We weren't prepared to handle the unexpected red herring. The opposition was economic, political, and religious, claiming, "If we give money to feminists, they will encourage women to leave their homes and destroy the Christian family." What is sorely needed now is people who are in religion saying, "But the church doesn't support wife-beating. It's the batterer that destroys the family".¹¹

Walker believes that we are in a changing time where patriarchy will be replaced with a new social order characterized by egalitarianism. She continues:

Probably the reason the women's movement has elicited such great fear is that it is correctly perceived as the beginning of this revolution. A cornerstone, then, of the creation of a new egalitarian social order would be to reverse the tides of violence committed against women.¹²

Patriarchy provides a social structure of ownership of women by men which makes it possible for men to do what they will with their women. Del Martin, in Battered Wives,

has carefully researched the history of patriarchy to show how that system has allowed and encouraged women to be beaten, stabbed, shot, choked, raped, and killed by their husbands.¹³ A film was recently produced about men who batter. Several men were given opportunity to tell their stories. A consistent theme in the film was that each man had a prevailing belief that he "owned" his wife.¹⁴

If a man owns a woman in marriage to protect his paternity, then he has the right to control her forcefully even to the extent of physical violence. But the laws did allow for a man to beat his wife. John Stuart Mill, a nineteenth-century philosopher, wrote:

From the very earliest twilight of human society, every woman...was found in a state of bondage to some man...Men are not required as a preliminary in marriage to prove that they are fit to be trusted with absolute power over another human being...The vilest malefactor has some wretched woman tied to him, against whom he can commit any atrocity except killing her - and even that he can do without too much danger of legal penalty.¹⁵

English common-law doctrine allowed the husband "the right to whip his wife, provided that he used a switch no bigger than his thumb". This was known as the "rule of thumb" law.¹⁶

The trend in the early American states was to make wife-beating illegal, and this direction has continued. An 1824 Mississippi decision allowed the husband to administer only "moderate chastisement in cases of emergency..."¹⁷ By 1894 even that right was ruled illegal in Mississippi.¹⁸ By 1975 most states in our country had

laws which permitted a wife to bring criminal action against a husband who afflicted injury upon her. Before the enactment of these laws, if a man struck a stranger on the street he would be arrested for assault and battery. But if he beat his wife in private or on the street, the law and society condoned it. We recall the incident in the streets of Queens in 1964 when Kitty Genovese was being beaten to death by an attacker. The neighbors saw the incident but pulled their shades because they thought the pair were husband and wife having a marital fight.¹⁹

The enforcement of the law has not kept up with the legal changes. The notion that "a man's home is his castle" contributes to refusals of police to interfere in domestic violence cases. When one woman called the police to complain that her husband had beaten her and then pushed her down the stairs, she got an answer from the policeman, "Listen, lady, he pays the bills, doesn't he? What he does inside his own house is his business".²⁰ This belief also enables judges to refuse to rule on wife-battering cases with the injunction to "go home and settle your differences."

Ann Jones, author of Women Who Kill, observes that on the wave of every push for women's rights, there is a wave of attention to women's criminality. The implicit assumption is that free women are dangerous women. Jones' observation is that dangerous women are ordinary women who

trying to find a way out of a bad situation. She states, "women who kill find extreme solutions to problems that thousands of women cope with in more peaceable ways from day to day."²¹

When attention began to be paid to the plight of battered women, a backlash of concern arose about the plight of battered men, which reached its apex in the media in February of 1978. There was a push for shelters for battered men. No shelters for battered men were established, and for a time the women's shelter movement suffered. Jones evaluates the results of the battered-husband bandwagon.

And most important, the battered-husband type which equated husband-beating with wife-beating obscured and trivialized the massive problem of wife abuse.²²

Three reputable sociologists in the field of domestic violence, Steinmetz, Gelles, and Straus, were drawn into the battered-husband issue for a period of time. They soon corrected themselves. In their most recent publication they give six reasons why wife-abuse is more critical than husband-abuse.²³

The model of authority for patriarchy is hierarchical. Authority comes from the top down. The man is the "head" of the family, and the wife is the obedient support person. A recent study showed that "wife-beating is much more common in homes where power is concentrated in the hands of the husband." The rate for wife-beating went from

less than 2% in democratic households to more than 20% in husband dominated households.²⁴ In democratic households there was less battering. If our culture approves of the hierarchical model which puts power in the hands of the husband, then that power also gives him sanction to punish the one who resists the attempts to be controlled (the wife and children). The inequality in a hierarchical family may initiate a chain reaction running throughout the family. For example, if the husband hits his wife, she may decide not to retaliate for she may suffer greater violence. She may instead hit the children, who in turn lash out at weaker brothers and sisters, who may then abuse the cat or dog.²⁵

Sexism

Sexism is a word that came into being in 1970. The word follows the definition pattern of "racism."²⁶ As racism is a belief that one's race is a primary determinant of human traits, so sexism is a belief that one's sex is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that sexual differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular sex. Sexism is a prejudice or discrimination based on sex, particularly a discrimination against women.²⁷

The traditional ideology in the patriarchal structure urges that the husband and the wife each have particular and separate functions. The husband should be

protector/provider for the family. In our culture he should go outside the home to work and provide for the family. He should be the one who makes the decisions, especially the important ones, as ruler/owner of the wife and children. The wife should bear and nurture the children. She should make a nest for the family and be subject to her master/lord husband. These role-expectations for husband and wife have become, throughout the ages, very defined.

When the battered woman and her husband accept these role expectations, an environment favoring battering has been created. If the husband believes he is to be the provider and if he cannot get a job and support his family, he may believe he is inadequate as a person. Even if the wife has a better-paying job and can support the family, the husband still feels it is his duty to be "breadwinner". The lowered self-esteem and stress from having an inadequate job may make the husband more prone to violence. He believes the wife must fulfill her domestic duties or she is not an adequate wife. If she does not fulfill them to the husband's expectation, he may beat her.

A study done in 1979 by Allen and Straus supported the findings of Straus and others. Violence by the husband and not by the wife are dependent on three factors.

1. The husband being dominant in family decisions.
2. The wife being a full-time housewife.
3. The wife being very worried about economic security.²⁸

The sexist economic and occupational structure of

society puts the woman in this kind of family at a severe disadvantage. The battered wife tends to be a full-time homemaker. She has not been trained for a career because she was planning to be married. She offers little resistance to her husband's violence because she is economically dependent upon him. If she were to look for a job, the ones that are open to her are lower in status and pay less than for a man with similar education.

Violence as a Way of Life

The study of Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz represents the first comprehensive national study of violence in the American family.²⁹ There were 2143 families interviewed in 1976, representative of the approximately 46 million families in the United States.³⁰ The goals were to measure the extent of the violence, to uncover the breadth of family violence, to find out what the violence meant to the participants, and to assess what caused violence to take place.

The authors concluded that a person runs a greater risk of assault, physical injury, and even murder in one's own home than in any other setting.³¹ They reported one researcher as estimating that police answer more calls involving family conflicts than calls for all criminal incidents combined - including murders, rapes, robberies, non-family assaults, and muggings.³²

These researchers reported on the approval of violence by the American public. The U. S. National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence done in 1970 showed that one out of four men and one out of six women surveyed approved of a husband slapping a wife under certain conditions.³³ According to a Harris Poll, 20% of all Americans approve of hitting a spouse on appropriate occasions. Among college educated people, the rate was 25%.³⁴

Although many people do not consider spanking violence, it was the author's intent to study spanking as violence. Some argue that spanking is for the child's own good. They support their arguments for spanking with quotes from Scripture along the theme of "spare the rod and spoil the child".³⁵ There is a long religious tradition in America beginning with the arrival of the Puritans for parents to use physical punishment on children to enable them to gain salvation. To "beat the devil" out of a child was a serious mandate.³⁶

Studies in both the United States and England revealed that 84% to 97% of all parents use physical punishment at some time in their child's life. These studies also showed that the persons most likely to be struck are typically the smallest, weakest members.³⁷ The results of the survey showed that over 70% of Americans believe that spanking a twelve-year-old child is necessary,

normal, or good.³⁸ In the interviews parents indicated that they slap or spank a child hard enough to get the child to stop doing what the parent does not want done.

Interviewer: When do you slap or spank your child?

Parent: When I want her to stop something... like when I want her to get away from the stove.

Interviewer: How hard do you hit her?

Parent: Hard enough to get her to stop.

Interviewer: You mean if the first slap doesn't get her to stop....

Parent: I hit her again, a little harder.³⁹

Since most of us have experienced violence as children in the most intimate of relationships, the family, the researchers concluded that we learn certain lessons from this experience.

1. Those who love you the most are also those who hit you. It is normal and acceptable.
2. Using physical punishment on children to secure a "good" end, ie., training in morally correct behavior or teaching the child to avoid injury, teaches the moral rightness of violence.
3. Violence is permissible when other things don't work.⁴⁰

There is strong evidence that children who observe their parents being violent to each other tend to be violent when they themselves marry.⁴¹ Parents who were subjected to a great deal of physical punishment as children have the highest rates of abusive violence toward their own children and each other.⁴² The whole atmosphere of approval and practice of violence in the home toward children, and to those who are smaller and weaker, sets an environment for wife-beating to occur and persist.

Other Factors That Affect The Extent Of Violence.

Stress increases the incidence of violence. The study showed that wife-abuse increased proportionately with the number of children living at home, up to six. Spouse abuse was less for couples with no children.⁴³ The families in the survey were polled for the number of major stresses they had experienced. There was a high correlation between the amount of stress and the level of spouse abuse.⁴⁴

Women are highly vulnerable to being physically abused during pregnancy. A study by Gelles in 1975 showed that one fourth of the women who were battered by their husbands were struck during pregnancy. For example:

Oh, yeah, he hit me when I was pregnant. It was weird. Usually he just hit me in the face with his fist, but when I was pregnant he used to hit me in the belly. It was weird.⁴⁵

The stress of the outside world and problems encountered there by the husband may be translated into violence against his wife when he arrives home. Why would a man beat his wife when he is unemployed or has had a bad day at work? It is more socially acceptable for him to beat his wife than to hit someone at work. Besides, he can get away with beating his wife. He can't get away with hitting his boss. When a man feels threatened and devalued at work, at least he can feel "like a man" at home. He can exercise his authority and mastery by using force and violence

against his wife.

Alcohol is a way of life for the majority of Americans. We have ads promoting the "good life" associated with alcohol. Social drinking is acceptable and desirable behavior. Along with this is the myth that one is not responsible for what one does "under the influence" of alcohol. Gelles indicates that there is a strong correlation between alcoholism and violence.⁴⁶ Alcoholics tend to beat their wives. Alcohol gives them an excuse to be violent when they would not be at other times. One wife reports:

He hit me many times. But at first, like I say, it was only when he was drinking...he wouldn't even slap me when he was sober no matter how mad he got.⁴⁷

Institutional Resources

Pagelow found a correlation between institutional response to a battered woman and her likelihood of staying in the abusive relationship while doing nothing to help herself. If she received negative response from the legal, medical, or religious institutions, she was less likely to act positively to alter her situation.⁴⁸

Almost all institutions traditionally try to reconcile the family. They work to keep the family together "at all costs." There is a popular assumption that intact families represent stability and that dissolution means failure or breakdown in the family system.⁴⁹

Even though it is against the law in many states for a man to assault his wife, when a battered woman calls the police department, she is typically met with the attitude that the problem is one of domestic squabbling. The police officers try to calm the couple. Commander James Bannon of the Detroit Police Department evaluated the competency of the police.

This paradox suggests to me that traditionally trained and socialized policemen are the worst possible choice to attempt to intervene in domestic violence... In my view the police attitude, which seems to say that what happens between man and wife in their own home is beyond the authority or ability of the police to control, is a "cop out." The real reason that police avoid domestic violence situations to the greatest extent possible is because we do not know how to cope with them. And besides we share (society's) views that domestic violence is an individual problem and not a public issue.⁵⁰

Police become very discouraged with the battered woman when she does not press charges. Pagelow discovered some reasons from the interviews with the women in her survey.

1. They are ignorant of their civil rights. They are seldom informed and almost never encouraged to demand them.
2. They are systematically persuaded not to demand equal justice under the law. Police are more inclined to suggest the wife take the children and leave the home instead of getting the husband to leave.
3. They have little or no protection under law against retaliation, except for recently established shelters, and then for only 30 days.⁵¹

Fortunately, some police departments are giving special training for handling domestic violence cases. They are helping women get to shelters. In some cases they are

pressing charges against the batterers themselves which new laws allow them to do.

Middle-class women who are beaten by their husbands are usually able to go to private doctors to be treated. Pagelow interviewed one medical doctor who practiced in an affluent neighborhood. He described himself as "neutral."

Many of my middle class patients who come to me with suspicious wounds make up some cock-and-bull story of how they got hurt. But, yes, I've seen women come in for treatment of injuries they claimed were given to them by their husbands. A lot of them are repeaters; they come back time and again. I ask them why they put up with it, and they can't give any good answers. It may be a matter of money, maybe they figure they'd lose out by leaving. I don't understand it - they just don't make sense. There's nothing you can do for them.⁵²

It seems to be common practice for physicians and psychiatrists to prescribe tranquilizers. This is evidenced by the large number of women who come to the shelters with prescribed drugs. Being tranquilized is the worst possible condition for a battered woman. She needs to be alert to be better able to avert a possible beating and to control her situation.⁵³

Many battered women seek advice from their pastors only to be told that they should "go home and forgive him." Davidson's critique of the clergy in 1978 was this:

The clergy preaches a male-oriented theology and structure of the marriage relationship. The clergy has not been in the vanguard of help for the battered wife. Instead, its attitudes about woman's place, duty, and nature, have added to the problem. Even now, with few exceptions, the silence from the churches in this issue is profound.⁵⁴

Davidson quotes Ellen Kirby of the Board of Global

Ministries of the United Methodist Church as she spoke on the issue:

The abuse of women...should be a major focus of concern for religious institutions in the next decade or until this terrible problem is eradicated from our society....Unfortunately,...the institutional church either through its blatant sexist theology, which has blessed the subordination of women, or through its silence, blindness, or lack of courage, has allowed itself to be one of the leading actors in the continuing tragedy of abuse.⁵⁵

Most of the denominations now have literature about wife abuse and many support shelters for battered women. As pastors become aware and educated they may be able to be more helpful to the battered women in their churches.

Future Hopes for the Culture

The women's movement has begun to raise our consciousness to the problem of abused wives. Changes have come that bring hope to battered women. We must, as a church, continue to impact the structures of society by changing the beliefs about male/female relationships from hierarchical to egalitarian, and from domination to liberation.

We must change the beliefs that legitimize violence in our society. First is the belief that spanking children is necessary, good, and beneficial. Professionals in the fields of child development and education seriously question spanking and physical violence as an option in discipline. Both these fields are working on new ways to teach and

discipline children without resorting to violence. Second is the availability of firearms. Free access to guns makes these weapons handy to be used against wives. Third is the glorification of violence on television. The persistent model of violence as a way to solve problems continues to support violence as a way of life.

We must change the sexist and patriarchal character of society and the family. "As long as we expect men to head the family because they are men, and women to care for children because they are women, we are going to have potential conflict and violence in homes."⁵⁶ We need to change the structure of the family to be an egalitarian institution where jobs and tasks are agreed upon on the basis of ability and interest rather than on sex. Decision-making and household tasks need to be shared.

We must support the shelter program which offers refuge to a victim when she has no other place to go. It helps her be aware of the options she has in life and to regain some of the self-esteem she has lost from being in an abusive situation. Being in the shelter with other women who have had similar experiences helps her know that she is not alone and that she has support. Even if she chooses to go back into her battering relationship, she goes back a little stronger for having left and had the shelter experience.

The battered woman is influenced by her culture to

accept violence toward her by her husband as normal. But long-standing images and patterns are now being challenged in favor of a new valuing of the role and position of wife. We who are in a position to pastor and counsel the battered woman have an opportunity to offer sanctuary during change, healing of the wounds, and new beginnings of life.

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CHAPTER 2: THE PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSION OF BATTERING

In dealing with the psychological dimension of battering, I will be focusing on the dynamics of the battering couple and the individuals that make up that dyad. I will be drawing largely upon the work of Lenore Walker, a psychologist with a feminist point of view, who began to study battered women in 1975. Walker was one of the first psychologists to study the psychology of battered women as victims. She reported the results of her work in The Battered Woman, published in 1979.¹

The traditional theory about battering had been that women participated in their own victimization; that somehow they "asked for it". The battered woman was thought to be masochistic and her man to be sadistic and violent in all his behavior. The traditional theorists regarded aggressiveness as natural. The women's movement had pointed out the huge amount of violence that seems to be committed against women by men. Walker's feminist analysis is that sexism and the power differential between men and women is at the bottom of all violence against women.²

In her search to explore the woman as victim in the battering relationship, Walker set out to interview women of all ages and walks of life. She chose to listen to the stories of the women themselves to see what she could learn. She collected over 120 detailed stories and listened to fragments of over 300 more stories.³

Walker found her ability to listen without blaming the victim a great asset. The women had rarely been able to find a listener who would hear them out. Walker declares,

Most listeners would cut them off as soon as they got to some of the more ghastly details. Either they were not believed or they were told that it could only be assumed that they liked what was happening to them, since they had not left the violent situation that they were in. But the pain these women experienced in retelling their stories was testimony enough that none of them had a deep psychological need to be battered.⁴ (emphasis mine)

The women Walker interviewed came from shelters and safe houses in the United States and England. They volunteered to be interviewed. Because the sample was not random, Walker could not use statistics of the interviews to support generalizations about battered women. Instead she concentrated on the commonalities expressed by the battered women and generalized from them. From the listening comes understanding.⁵

A woman was considered to be battered if she declared herself to be. She was considered battered if she had been abused more than once in a relationship with a man. If she had been beaten once and stayed and was beaten a second time she was considered battered. She must have gone through the battering cycle at least twice.⁶

Learned Helplessness

Walker found that most of the research on family violence tended to focus on the pathology of the man and

woman involved and on the intrapsychic conflicts of each.⁷ Psychologists concluded, when they observed women repeatedly going back to battering relationships, that there must be some flaw in their personalities. They labeled the woman as masochistic in nature, which meant placing the blame on the victim. The men were declared to be mentally ill, or psychopathic, which meant absolving them of responsibility for their behavior.⁸

Walker's research led her to conclude that this approach is inadequate. Women do not remain in the battering relationship because they like being beaten. Some stay because they are economically and socially dependent. Others have no safe place to go. Psychologists tend to counsel the family to stay together at all costs, even at the expense of physical and psychological well-being.

Listening to the stories of the women who participated in her survey, Walker observed a three-stage cycle of violence. She developed a psychological rationale which explains why the battered woman becomes a victim and how the process of victimization is perpetuated. The rationale is based on the social-learning theory of "learned helplessness" developed by Martin Seligman.⁹

Seligman asserts that if an individual is caught in a position where repeated attempts to make changes in the environment fail, the individual will learn to be helpless. This helpless state can continue to exist until some

external force changes the environment. This situation can cause great anxiety and depression.

Seligman and his researchers put dogs in cages and administered electric shocks at random and varied intervals. When the dogs learned that no matter what they did they could not control the shock, they became compliant, passive, and submissive. When the researchers changed the procedure and tried to teach the dogs that they could escape by crossing to the other side of the cage, the dogs would not respond. Even when the door was left open, the dogs remained passive, refusing to leave to avoid the shock. It took repeated dragging of the dogs to the exit to teach them to avoid the shock. The earlier in life that the dogs learned to be helpless, the longer it took them to overcome the effects of being helpless. Once they were retaught that they could avoid the shock, their helplessness faded.¹⁰

The learned helplessness theory has three basic components: (1) information about what will happen; (2) thinking (learning, expectation, belief, and perception) about what will happen; and (3) reaction toward what does happen.¹¹ It is the second point, belief or perception, that determines the actions of a given individual. If a woman believes that she cannot control a situation, that she is helpless, she will respond passively and submissively. This perception can become reality. Once a woman believes she cannot control what happens to her, it is difficult for

her to believe she can ever influence it, even when she sometimes experiences a favorable outcome.¹²

Walker found that battered women seemed to be most afflicted with feelings of helplessness in their relationships with men. She observed that many women were successful, competent, and not helpless in their careers and other areas of life. It was only when they were relating to the batterer that they exhibited helpless behavior.¹³

In applying the concept of learned helplessness to battered women, we see the process of how the battered woman becomes victimized. Repeated batterings act like electrical shocks to diminish the woman's motivation to respond. She becomes passive. Her perception is changed. She believes that nothing she can do will help, whether or not it is true. She generalizes her helplessness in her relationship so that she is saying to herself, "No matter what I do, I have no influence." Ultimately, her sense of emotional well-being is affected, and she is more prone to anxiety and depression.¹⁴

Walker contends "the very fact of being a women, more specifically a married woman, automatically creates a situation of powerlessness."¹⁵ She sees this as one of the detrimental effects of sex-role stereotyping. Women are taught by parents and society that their personal worth is based on their physical beauty and appeal to men rather than their creative responses to life situations. Girls learn to

be more passive than boys. Women, then, begin marriage at a psychological disadvantage.¹⁶

Our patriarchal structure of marriage gives men more power than women. In many states it is not against the law for a man to rape his wife. The husband has legal power to decide where the family will live. Economic realities mean that men more often than women hold the higher-paying jobs which give them the economic power in the marriage. These men often assume more decision-making power as well. Most men are physically stronger and bigger than women.¹⁷ The male's greater physical strength, the economic realities, the laws and the cultural conditioning all work like electric shocks to condition the women to learned helplessness.

As the dogs were dragged to the exit and to safety, so can a battered woman learn ways to overcome her battering situation. Some of this help may come from the "outside". The women can be persuaded to leave the battering relationship. Safe houses are effective places for her to experience alternative choices. As a battered woman realizes the power and choice she does have, her strength grows, and her helplessness fades.

The Cycle Theory of Violence

In her interviews with battered women Walker discovered a definite battering cycle that the women

experienced. This cycle is repeated over and over with each woman in relationship with her batterer. Understanding it can help us see how women fall into learned helplessness behavior and why they do not attempt to escape.

Walker's battering cycle has three distinct phases: (1) the tension-building phase; (2) the explosion or acute battering incident; (3) and the calm, loving respite. Walker has not been able to estimate how long a couple will stay in one phase. It seems to depend upon each couple's unique relationship and upon the stage of life in which they are. Walker has found that certain treatment interventions are more successful if they occur at one phase rather than another.¹⁸

Phase one is the tension-building phase when minor battering incidents occur. These can be in the form of verbal tirades, throwing things, or temper tantrums. The woman, believing that what she does will prevent her batterer's anger from escalating, works to control the situation. She may become loving, compliant, nurturing, and anticipating his every whim; or she may stay out of his way. If she is successful, the minor incident will end. If he explodes, she assumes the guilt. By accepting some of the responsibility for his abusive behavior she has become his accomplice.

To keep him from hurting her more she must maintain this role. She must not become angry, so she denies the

anger she feels from being unjustly abused physically and psychologically. But the anger is there, under cover. She rationalizes that perhaps she did do something to deserve it, or she is lucky he didn't throw the dish at her instead of the wall, or she justifies him and excuses his behavior by saying to herself, "he had a bad day at work," or, "he has been drinking, he can't help it."

As the tension builds, it becomes harder and harder for the woman to deny and control her anger. Her passiveness seems to spur the batterer on. She is not able to put controls on his behavior. Society by its attitude allows him to discipline his wife. Most batterers are only violent in their homes because society will not allow them to be violent elsewhere. As the woman becomes more passive, he becomes more possessive and aggressive, until the tension between them becomes unbearable.¹⁹

Phase two is the acute battering incident which is characterized by lack of predictability and lack of control. Anticipation of what might occur causes great stress for the woman. She may suffer from sleepless nights, loss of appetite, oversleeping, overeating, or fatigue. She may have severe headaches, stomach ailments, high blood pressure and other physical responses to the tension.

When the acute battering incident happens, it is entirely in the man's control. The woman has ceased to be able to manipulate the environment to his satisfaction.

Both parties accept the fact that his rage is out of control. The batterer starts out by wanting to teach his woman a lesson. He stops when he feels she has learned her lesson. She has no control over when he stops. She experiences disbelief that the incident is really happening to her and dissociation from the attack. She endures until it is over.

Those of us who are accustomed to being in control of our lives have a hard time believing that the woman can do nothing to stop her batterer. Once she becomes aware of her state as a battered wife and begins to decide to take charge of her life there are some things she can do in phase two, such as leaving the premises when she sees an attack coming. When the violence of phase three begins and the batterer's adrenaline is going full force, there is very little the woman can do to stop him. His anger and strength keep him going. Her fear and state of mind immobilize her.

Many of the reactions battered women report are similar to those of disaster victims, who generally suffer emotional collapse twenty-four to forty-eight hours after a catastrophe. Battered women experience those similar symptoms of listlessness, depression, and feelings of helplessness. These victims tend to remain isolated for at least twenty-four hours. It is common for battered women to wait several days before seeking medical aid and help from mental health professionals.

If police are called, it is during phase two. The police try to calm down the batterer and his victim and then leave. This seldom has any effect, for the batterer resumes his violence when the police leave. Police complain of being attacked by the woman when they attempt to intervene during an acute attack of violence. What the police fail to understand is that the woman knows that when the police leave, her batterer will escalate the violence. She is trying to show her loyalty to her man so perhaps he will not resume the beating.²⁰

Phase three is characterized by extremely loving, kind, and contrite behavior by the batterer. The batterer is trying to make up for his abusive behavior. It is during this period that the victimization of the woman becomes complete.

The tension that built up in phase one has been released in phase two, so there is a period of calm. The batterer is charming and loving. He begs forgiveness and promises never to do it again. He believes he will never do it again. He believes he can control himself. He believes he has taught her a lesson so she will never behave in a way to make him do it again. He promises to reform. He manages to convince everyone involved that he really can do it. This time he means it.

It was at the beginning of phase three that Walker made contact with her battered women. They were most likely

to leave the men at the end of the acute battering incident. Many whom she interviewed were in the hospital recovering from injuries inflicted by their batterers. Walker reports on their state of mind.

Within a few days, they went from being lonely, angry, frightened, and hurt to being happy, confident, and loving. Initially, they had realistically assessed their situations. They accepted their inability to control the batterers' behavior. They were experiencing anger and terror, which helped motivate them to consider making major changes in their lives. These women were thoroughly convinced of their desire to stop being victims, until the batterer arrived. I always knew when a woman's husband had made contact with her by the profusion of flowers, candy, and other gifts in her hospital room.²¹

He uses any means possible to keep his woman: the influence of his family and friends, and his confessions and promises. All of these play on her guilt. He would fall apart without her. What about the children deprived of their father?

The woman is held responsible for any consequences of his behavior by herself, her batterer and her family and friends. She holds to the traditional values of the permanency of marriage. If we love each other, we can conquer all, even this. The batterer needs her. He needs help. The implication is that if she stays with him, he will get that help. Walker has found, however, that the most common time for a batterer to get help is after the woman has left.²²

The battered woman chooses to believe that the loving behavior she sees during phase three is what he is

really like. She chooses to discount the behavior of phase two, the violent attack. Phase three is the time when most helpers see her. Since this is the time when she is experiencing the rewards of the marriage, this is the time when she resists ending the relationship. She really loves him. She hopes, once again, that phase one and two will not happen again. She idealizes the relationship. She sells her psychological and physical safety for a dream. She has become an accomplice to her own battering.²³

Are all women as helpless as the learned helplessness factor would lead us to believe? Connie Dorn thinks not.²⁴ The women she has observed in 17 out of the 21 couples she has counseled are characterized by being knowledgeable of their legal rights, having competent jobs and not appearing to be victims. The men in these relationships appear to be dependent, impulsive and intensely possessive of their wives. The wives see themselves as psychologically stronger and more stable than their husbands. These women need to be needed. They fear abandonment more than violence. They see themselves as responsible for their husband's well-being. They make excuses for their husbands' behavior and forgive his violent outbursts.

It seems to me that Dorn is not as far from Walker as it may appear. Both groups of women are caught in a battering relationship because of their belief systems.

Walker sees the women as believing they can stop their husband's violence by "acting better." Dorn sees them as believing they can change their husbands by doing good to them, by being their saviors. Both groups of women fail to change the batterer. Both groups of women are deeply dependent and attached to their batterers. Dorn's women become victims by trying to be rescuers.²⁵ It is possible for a battered woman to fall into both Walker's and Dorn's description.

The Profile of the Battering Couple

Those who have worked with battered women have listened to the women describe the men who battered them. At first, because so few men would consent to interviews or therapy, these descriptions were the only ones we had of the violent men. Recently therapists who have been able to work with the batterers have heard the men's stories. Basically their stories concur with the descriptions by the battered women. From these interviews of both the battered women and their batterers, we can get a glimpse into the backgrounds of the couple and of their life together.

The information regarding the battered women comes from Lenore Walker's interviews with the women from the shelters and from Mildred Pagelow's questionnaire interviews of 109 women from shelters.²⁶ Pagelow also reported on the work of two men who had worked with male batterers in

couple therapy. Michael Wellins, a civilian employee of an Orange County police department in California, ran a crisis-intervention unit working with 110 couples.²⁷

Wayne Blackburn, a licensed clinical social worker at a family service organization, dealt with 150 couples who came in to get help for wife-abuse.²⁸ Other information on battering men came from Emerge, a Boston men's collective that works specifically with violent men in abusive relationships.²⁹

The Childhood Homes of the Woman and Her Batterer

Walker found that although some of the women in her interviews had experienced or had seen battering in their families, for most women this abuse from the husband was the first experience with battering. These women were raised in traditional homes where sex-role stereotyping was strong. The fathers of these women treated their daughters like "fragile dolls".³⁰ They were expected to grow up and marry a man who would take care of them like their father had done. They were not taught to care for themselves but to be dependent upon a man.

In Pagelow's study the women fell into two categories. The first group came from predominantly conservative, usually religious, homes where divorce never, or rarely, occurred. Physical punishment was absent or very mild. The homes were either loving or very controlled,

traditional, and paternalistic-authoritarian. The women reacted to the violence by their husbands with shock, embarrassment, and shame. They could not reveal the situation to their parents or families. The second group in Pagelow's study came from homes where violence was common. These women went from domination by father to domination by husband. They appeared to enter the relationship with some expectation of physical assault and believed that they had the endurance and the wits to overcome the problem.³¹

While most of the women did not come from violent homes, Walker reported that the batterers typically did. Either they saw their fathers beat their mothers, or they themselves were beaten. Even if overt violence was not reported, a general lack of respect for women and children was evident.³² Blackburn's experience was that all of the men he had worked with came from violent homes, some of them extremely violent.³³

Women reported to Walker that a battering incident would be triggered by a visit from the batterer's mother. The women described their batterers as having "unusual" and "ambivalent love-hate" relationships with their mothers. Many times the batterer would abuse his mother as well as his wife.³⁴ Blackburn reports that a wife's behavior that reminds the batterer of his mother can send him into a rage.³⁵ It would seem that the batterer could be looking for that ideal mothering he never received as a child. He

expects nurturing and caring from his wife. As one man put it:

(She was) there to make me feel good. "Why didn't you fix my supper the way I wanted it?" That sort of thing. In any number of ways that was her primary role, I think, feeding me, nourishing me emotionally. And after a period of time, I became very inept at nourishing myself.³⁶

The battered woman tries to fulfill her husband's expectations. She has so internalized the cultural myth that it is her responsibility to see that things go well at home that she thinks she is responsible for her batterer's behavior. She is not sure what she could have done better, but she certainly could have done something.

After we got married, every little thing would set him right off. It seemed he needed extra special loving at all times, and... I wasn't doing that. Evidently, that was causing him to be very upset. I always got the impression that I wasn't loving enough, giving enough, that there was something defective in my character as far as giving love. That's basically the message he gave to me.³⁷

Self-Esteem

Walker found that the battered woman has low self-esteem. The women interviewed devalued their abilities, especially their homemaking abilities. They more realistically evaluated their abilities connected with activities outside the home, if they had any. The continual criticism from their batterers eroded their sense of self-worth, particularly in the role of wife.³⁸

Blackburn described the batterers as "men who adopt

all the external trappings of an aggressive, controlling image but are dependent and out of control within."³⁹

Wellins described the batterers as lacking in ego-strength with high role expectations for themselves and their families. Because they lack self-esteem, they try aggressive ways to maintain whatever self-esteem they have left. A batterer would say:

If I'm not worth anything and I want to maintain a relationship with you, I've got to do everything to try to control you, corral you, because if I don't, then I'm going to lose you.⁴⁰

Jealousy

Wellins describes the jealousy as pathological and coming from the batterers low ego-strength.⁴¹ The jealousy at first appeared to the woman receiving it as attentiveness and care, but then it grew to possessiveness and constant surveillance of her activities. One woman described it this way.

He used to drive me to work in the morning, pick me up at noon so we could have lunch together, and then pick me up at five o'clock so that we could go home together. I couldn't have any friends at work except those I could talk to between the jobs I had to do during the day...Bob was always there...I was accused of sleeping with this man (that she had smiled at in the restaurant), and not only was I accused of having an affair with him, but Bob spent hours telling me in detail every single sexual act that we had done together....He also believed I was having an affair with my boss, and he went so far as to call my boss's wife and tell her what he suspected.⁴²

Traditional Roles

Pagelow found a strong correlation between the willingness of a woman to stay in a battering relationship without retaliating and her strong commitment to traditional patriarchal ideology coupled with her willingness to invest in her relationship with her husband.⁴³ The battered woman is a traditionalist in her orientation to marriage. She believes "a woman's place is in the home." She believes in family unity and the prescribed feminine sex-role stereotype. No matter how important her career might be to her, she is ready to give it up if it will make her batterer happy.

It was the greatest thing that had happened to me in a long time. Can you imagine what an unattractive, intelligent woman who thought herself asexual for so many years feels when a man finally pays attention to her?...I didn't think of myself as a woman. I thought of myself as a lawyer...but when Larry came along...I found myself being the feminine sweet thing that my own self-image never said I was,...I loved it...I'm embarrassed to say it because it took me so long and so hard to get to where I am professionally, and I'd never give up my profession. I know that now, but there was a little bit of time with Larry that I really thought I could. That's how powerful sex was between us... there wasn't much else that was good...⁴⁴

Those women who keep their jobs feel guilty. Many turn the money they make over to their husbands. The battered woman views the husband as the head of the family, even though she may be the one holding the family together economically.

Blackburn described his men as authoritarian and patriarchal. They are family men with very rigid ideas of

masculinity and femininity and sex-segregated roles.⁴⁵

When Wellin was asked if the men he dealt with were traditional, he replied:

Yes, they are - they believe in segregated sex roles, divorce is unthinkable - but it goes even beyond. The difference is like people who can deal with lack of order as opposed to order; they have rigid boundaries...locked in...need for structure. Things are black or white, there's certainty, rigid expectations, rigid role models. This applies to both parties.⁴⁶

Stress

Batterers do not deal effectively with stress.⁴⁷

Because they are men who must live and work within clearly defined boundaries with clear rules and parameters, one can see why a batterer would have trouble if things are not going as he expects. He tends to use primitive defense mechanisms such as denial, projection, and aggression to deal with emotional difficulties.⁴⁸ Because he believes he has a right to beat his wife, he takes out his anger and frustration on her by projecting his difficulties onto her. If a batterer is a user of drugs and alcohol in an attempt to alleviate stress, that gives him a reason, but not an excuse, for beating his wife.

The battered wife's stress comes from living in an environment where she fears she will be beaten and feels she can do nothing to prevent it. The battered woman is a "keeper of the peace." She expends enormous amounts of energy controlling the environment so he "won't get mad or

upset." She controls parents, children, and events, becoming an expert at manipulation.

I would come home, and the kids would be waiting outside for me, telling me, "Don't go in, Mother, He's drunk and crazy again, just don't go in the house."...I tried being good, being quiet, being very solicitous, being sexually attractive, being not sexually attractive, keeping the kids quiet, sending the kids away, but it never did any good.⁴⁹

The battered woman has severe physical reactions as a result of living under stress and fear. She may complain to her doctor about fatigue, backache, headaches, depression and anxiety. The stress affects all aspects of the woman's life.

Blame & Guilt

The batterer blames his wife for his actions.

Walker related an incident that occurred in a supermarket.

...the woman removed an item from the shelf. The man glared at her and said, "Now you've done it. Now you've done it. You've made me mad. If you don't put that back, you will make me even madder. Do you know how mad you are making me? Now you've gone and done it!" She turned to him and said quietly, "We need this for dinner." He looked at her with fury and said, "You've make me mad. Now you've really made me mad by saying that. You can just forget about your hairdresser's appointment. I can't stand it when you make me mad this way!"⁵⁰

In working with battering men in groups, Emerge observed in the beginning sessions that there is a high degree of defensiveness and blaming of wives for behavior.

I'm not trying to justify my actions or nothing, it's just that sometimes a man can only take so much. My wife just never lets up, I mean she really knows how to

get me going. Don't you think sometimes the woman is asking for it?⁵¹

Yeah, and she knows just how to bust my balls. I mean, she's not big enough to hurt me physically or anything but she's good with words. She can talk circles around me. But what I want to know is, shouldn't she know how to handle me?⁵²

It is not until the batterer assumes responsibility for his action can the cycle be broken.

Sexual Relationship

Some women describe their husbands as gentle attentive lovers at the beginning of their relationships. Then the sexual experience gradually becomes more abusive and sometimes bizarre. The batterer frequently uses sex as an act of aggression.

Peter was just the greatest lover I'd ever had. He was kind, gentle, and just, oh, so good....But when Peter's mood changed, he could be the most vicious and violent man. I soon learned to be fearful until I knew which Peter would be with me.⁵³

I can't remember when we ever had sexual intercourse normally. I know we did at the beginning of our marriage but it sure changed later on.⁵⁴

The Batterer's Dual Personality

The stories of the women Walker interviewed revealed what would appear to be a dual personality. The batterer would be congenial and happy, especially to the public, but in private with his spouse would resort to all forms of violence. He is charming and competent on one hand, and then goes into violent angry scenes with his wife.

He's a good person, Walter is, not a bad person. He believes in giving to the public. He wouldn't hurt a soul. Why me? He pushes himself day and night to get his programs through it's nonstop work all the time...Sometimes I even like the glare of public life. Certainly it forces Walter to pay attention to me when others are around. But shut off the TV cameras and he's mean and nasty and ignores me as usual.⁵⁵

I must say that there were some moments on those camping weekends that were the nicest ones we ever had. When Jim would relax and feel good about himself, about me and the kids, life was just beautiful. You never knew, though, sometimes those wonderful moods could change just as fast as a storm could come up over the lake. All of us learned to recognize when his mood was changing from a happy, playful one into a mean, demanding, cruel one. At that time, though, it was hard to get away from him, all six of us crammed into that camper.⁵⁶

Perhaps this dual personality is part of the "sanctity of the family" notion. It is permissible to be angry, rude and violent at home, but not in public. The batterer protects his image to the public and the public believes him. Many times he lies to friends and relatives about his behavior and his wife's behavior, blaming her for the problems. The family believes him instead of her.

Economics

The economic status of women in our society works to trap a woman in the battering relationship through her fear deprivation or poverty if she leaves. Women in a marriage are usually at an economic disadvantage. The economic situation for a married woman in our society is that she is dependent upon her husband's salary for support. This is especially true for an unemployed homemaker who has given

herself to child-rearing. The woman has few resources if she should want to leave the marriage. She is unskilled for the job market. She becomes dependent upon unenforceable alimony laws for support. She may be deprived of child support because she will not agree to visitation rights from a husband who abuses her children.⁵⁷

In the marriage relationship money can be used as a coercive weapon. The batterer can withhold money as punishment. He can continually call into judgement the wife's financial decisions. He may hand her his paycheck, with the order to pay all the bills, refusing to take into consideration that there is not enough money to go around. If she tries to cut corners by putting cheaper meals on the table, he criticizes her and becomes angry because she is serving inferior food. If she wants to work he may say, "no wife of mine is going to work."⁵⁸

Middle-class women can become captives in their palatial mansions when their abusive husbands control the money. If they have been in long-term marriages without working, they may lack skills for supporting themselves in the style of life to which they have been accustomed. Some wives do not have access to the checkbook or to credit cards to give them financial resources to escape their violent relationships. One woman came to the shelter in the family's motor home without any money.⁵⁹

When a battered woman wants to leave her abusive

husband, she faces the question of how to support herself and her children. The women who are most likely to leave are those supported by welfare.⁶⁰ The more affluent women of middle and upper class are dependent upon a husband's support check. The economic power differential is very great if the husband has become economically successful and the wife has not developed the same economic power because she has been raising children. If the woman decides to leave the relationship or if the man uses divorce as the ultimate punishment for not living up to his expectations, then the economic settlement in divorce becomes a real problem. The woman's fears of what he will do are deep so she is easily coerced by him. The husband may threaten to take his wage-earning capacity out of the country to keep the wife from having the fruits of his labor.

Psychological Battering

Psychological battering accompanies physical battering and it may also be present in a relationship without physical battering. The factor is still coercion of a woman without regard to her rights. The same dynamics of guilt/blame are at work. The husband can use money to control the wife by giving and withholding according to what he wants rather than negotiated transactions. The woman lives in fear that her husband will "do something." Walker relates the story of such a woman.

"I'm not sure why I am here," said Bonnie while wringing her hands nervously during that first session. "I think it's important for you to know that I can't tell you who I really am because I'm afraid that my husband will find out. I know you work with battered women and I'm sure I'm a battered woman even though he has never hit me, I just know he can," she said in a quivering voice. "I just know if I push him, he will."⁶¹

Possibilities for Therapy

Many battered woman and their batterers have sought help through psychotherapy. Walker's evaluation was that the services of most helpers proved unsuccessful for the battering couple and detrimental to the woman.

Psychotherapists have been trained that victims often provoke attacks so they do not deal with the acute battering incidents. They tend to treat the victim's symptoms of anxiety, depression, and other distresses rather than the cause, the battering incidents. Many women are given medications and even sent to mental institutions for the emotional problems caused by their victimization.⁶²

Traditional marriage therapy makes a basic assumption that the parties are equal in power as negotiations are made for behavioral contracts.⁶³ The batterer's resistance to assuming responsibility for his behavior and the wife's too easily accepting the blame for his behavior are factors that make traditional marriage therapy unworkable. If there has been a history of battering the wife is filled with fear. Her husband intimidates her into submission. She cannot deal with the

hurt and anger she feels at being violated so many times. The counselor cannot protect her from a beating when she gets home because she has said the "wrong thing."

The power dynamic in a couple is very important.

Murray Straus observes:

However, there are several reasons why even a single beating is important ... It often takes only one such event to fix the balance of power in a family for many years - perhaps for a lifetime.⁶⁴

If the imbalance of power is not dealt with, the assumption is that the woman is "asking for it" is prevalent. Wives often experience the counselor as blaming her for what happens.

The marriage counselor seemed to be more on John's side than mine, but I thought that was OK. I really thought that if I could at least tell him all of these things that John was doing to me, he would tell John to stop, and John would listen to him then. But he didn't believe me. Each time I told him something that John did, that man would say to me, "What did you do to cause it?"⁶⁵

A twenty-year old daughter who was in family therapy commented on her father's behavior.

The worst thing about him is that he's so smart. We went to family counseling once and he drove the poor psychiatrist up the wall by sending the conversations around in circles as well as scaring him to death.⁶⁶

Walker and a male colleague developed some fairly successful techniques in that were effective in reducing the amount of violence in the battering relationship. The goal of therapy was to learn to recognize and control anger rather than to learn to "fight fair." The couple was encouraged to separate for a short period of time. Each was

to meet with a separate therapist so that each could gain some independence. Each person needs to be strengthened so that the relationship becomes free of coercion. The goal is for each person of the dyad to become interdependent, which means that each could function on his/her own if desired. In the beginning of therapy the therapist takes charge of the behaviors, structuring ways for the couple to control anger and communicate more accurately to each other. As the couple becomes more adept at handling their anger and communication, the therapist gives up control.⁶⁷

Janet Geller has developed an effective treatment model of spouse abuse. If a woman wants to terminate the marriage, then individual therapy is recommended; but if the battered woman wants to stay in the relationship, Geller believes the only way to eliminate the violence is to work with both partners in the marriage. She recognizes that the violent behavior is the "sole responsibility"⁶⁸ of the violent partner, and that he must be treated for his violent impulses. The wife as victim is a part of the tenacious system that has usually continued for the life of the marriage. For the system to be broken, both partners must be involved in the change. The change begins when the wife uses her power to get the husband to come into therapy. If she can get him into therapy, then she is no longer victim. Having him there at the beginning removes his usual rationale of "it's all her problem." It also helps to

minimize the feeling he may have of the wife and counselor being in collusion if he is there from the beginning.

Geller's experience is that when the abusing partner agrees to therapy, the violence gets under control in about two months. The following case example shows how she works.

After two sessions which were dominated by the abusive partner's monologue on his wife's victimization of him, and where both she and I were relatively silent, I asked him how he felt when he hit her, regardless of the reasons. He did not seem to understand what I meant, acting bewildered. Finally, he said that he doesn't feel anything. He tried to again convey that it was all her fault. I interrupted him and asked the wife how she felt when he yelled at her and eventually hit her. She said that she felt afraid. I encouraged her to elaborate on her feelings. He tried to interrupt several times to explain how she "made" him respond as he did. Each time, I cut him off and asked him to listen to what his wife was saying. I told him that he would have his chance to respond, but I thought that we should let her finish first. With my encouragement and probing, the wife was able to add that in addition to the fear, she also felt angry and hurt. She said that she lost her "self-confidence," and that she's nervous all the time, and that she gets "sick" a lot....In subsequent sessions, she was finally able to tell me in front of her husband that she gets sick the day after he's violent with her. But this time he was open to hearing this and was no longer avoiding responsibility for the abuse.⁶⁹

Geller feels that working with families with an abusive husband is a taxing task. To be so close to violence in an intimate relationship, when that kind of violence is offensive to us, is difficult. Therapists who have experienced violence in their own families may have some understanding of the dynamics of violence in the family. The tendency for the therapist to "rescue" the victim is strong. The therapist needs the support of a

staff or team to avoid these traps and early burn-out.⁷⁰

Michael Wellins, who worked with 110 couples where the husband is a chronic abuser, limits his sessions to six weeks and then refers the couples to the Department of Mental health, semi-public family organizations or private counselors. He recommends assertion training, stress management, support groups for anger control, and good counseling.⁷¹

Blackburn has dealt with 150 cases in two years. He draws three conclusions in his work with the batterers.

1. Male batterers must be pressured into seeking help in the first place, usually by the wife threatening to leave.
2. They tend to deny or minimize their violence, blaming it on the women.
3. They will willingly continue in treatment for as long as there is the desired goal of getting their wives back home or of keeping them there. If the women refuse to reconcile, the men terminate.⁷²

Blackburn insists that there be no violence as long as he is working with the couple. If there is violence the woman must call the police and press charges. He feels that introspection is of little value because of the rigidity of the batterers, so he builds self-esteem, concentrating on interests where they excel. He recommends assertiveness training for both. He looks at the causes for stress and finds ways to remove stress and to cope with it. He works on alternatives for anger besides violence, such as time-out periods, calling a hot line, or hitting a punching bag in the garage.⁷³

Albert Roberts reports on the services for batterers in the United States. In 1975 there were only two specially designed treatment programs for batterers. In January of 1981 there were about eighty.⁷⁴ These programs focus on changing the abusive behavior patterns with anger control techniques, behavioral approaches to stress management, and alternative communication skills. The goal is to help the batterer to understand the dynamics of his out-of-control behavior and to take responsibility for his actions.

One such service for batterers is the Emerge Collective. Emerge was formed in 1977 by eight men at the request of the women working in shelters for battered women in the Boston area. The need was to have counseling available for the men who were abusive to their mates. Emerge decided to be an all-male organization working only with males, especially those desiring to overcome their violence toward women.⁷⁵

The men of Emerge have taken seriously the thesis of Susan Brownmiller that all violent men serve to control all women, for the benefit of all men.⁷⁶ Emerge views all men on a continuum of violence and believe that almost every man is capable of violence at sometime in his life. Emerge is committed to speaking out against violence toward women and making a choice to be nonviolent. Since violence is learned, they are discovering and teaching ways for men to learn not to be violent.⁷⁷

Emerge established itself as a collective with the belief that as men relating and sharing with each other they could help each other overcome the learned behavior of violence toward women. Their nurturing non-hierarchical structure served as a model for other men. Emerge sees the use of violence as a method of solving problems and settling differences as a result of three interrelated forces.

1. The socialization of boys to be aggressive and dominant in their social relations.
2. The reinforcement of these values by parents, teachers, and social forces such as the media, television, films, and the use of violence by the police and military.
3. The social norms of patriarchal society which dictate that men are the dominant gender and are free to exercise this power in family life, social relationships, and in the institutions which direct our lives.⁷⁸

Males have been socialized to repress their feelings of fear with "big boys don't cry." Boys have been taught to be strong and to not display affection or other "female" characteristics. When men repress emotions they transfer that part of their lives to women and so create a great dependency on women for fulfillment of the relationship. Woman's role is to second-guess her man's needs and meet them without his having to ask. The man's abuse is a way of forcing the woman to stay with him. If she leaves he has to face his dependency upon her, and that scares him.⁷⁹

Emerge has found group counseling to be the most effective way of working with men to change the patterns of violence. The peer-group setting makes it possible for the

men to receive both confrontation regarding their behavior and support and models for change. The group also allows for a place to practice new behaviors.⁸⁰

Projecting of blame onto the wife is a part of the early counseling sessions. By blaming the wives the men are able to remove themselves from accepting the responsibility for their own violence. They focus more on their own "good intentions" and on their wives' alleged "provocation" than on their own behavior.⁸¹

In later sessions the men are able to talk about feelings and share with each other.

I guess that's what men are supposed to think you know, you always got to be on top of everything, but it's not right. I've always been a loner and I've never bothered other people with my problems, but sometimes you need a shoulder to cry on, not just bullshitting in a bar either.⁸²

The men are by this time accepting more responsibility for their violence, looking into themselves and learning new ways of expression.⁸³

As the group ends the abusive men are regarding their wives more as partners, rather than objects to be controlled. They process the separation issues of the group ending and make plans for their continued growth.⁸⁴

Individual therapy has been helpful for the battered woman. Action-oriented therapy and cognitive therapy are more useful, for psychoanalytic forms of therapy have not been found to resolve a battered woman's situation.⁸⁵ Cognitive therapy to restructure her belief system is

helpful to maintain change. Other therapies may be useful as the woman progresses, such as career counseling, assertiveness training, parent education, and couples therapy.

Feminist therapy has been most helpful for counseling battered women.⁸⁶ Consciousness-raising as to the choices the woman has is the beginning. She will need to be aware of her situation. The battered woman has taken her identity from those around her, mostly males: her husband, her doctor, her lawyer, her pastor. The feminist concept of "naming" is helpful for the woman in restructuring her identity. She will need to challenge those who say who she is, especially her abusing husband who has called her names and labeled her. Battered women's support groups draw on the feminist concept of sisterhood. It is in the community of other women that a woman's identity can be affirmed. Anger can be expressed and accepted. As the woman gets more in touch with her anger and what she has been victim to, her rage increases. The group can be a place where she can become aware of it and express it safely.

Support for battered women as individuals has mainly come through the shelter movement. The shelter provides a safe place where the woman can think through what she wants to do. When she enters the shelter usually she has just suffered a beating. Most shelters have a 72-hour

cooling-off time where the woman may make no outside contacts and can get herself together. She finds a supportive community in the other women in the shelter. She finds that she is not the only one who has been beaten. She discovers that there are some options and that she has some choices. Her whole outlook on life is changed when she is away from the control of her batterer and in a supportive community. Even if she goes back to him, which she may very likely do, she has been changed. She left once. She can leave again. The conditioning and experiences of a lifetime are not overcome and changed completely in 30 days, which is the most time a woman can stay in a shelter.

Group therapy is offered in some shelters. Many times this is with a professional therapist or counselor-in-training. Other shelters are operated on a collective basis, and the women provide their own consciousness-raising and support groups. Some shelters provide support groups for women who have left the shelters. These groups have two phases. The first deals with the crisis of whether she will leave her husband, where she will live, how will she support herself. The second phase deals with living on her own, parenting, dating, and how to deal with her former battering husband.⁸⁷

Hot lines are available in many areas to offer support and information to women who are in battering relationships. It sometimes takes many contacts with

supporters for a woman to gain enough ego-strength to do something about a battering relationship.

The recognition that the battered woman is truly a victim is necessary for us to understand and break the cycle of violence. Walker's insights into learned helplessness as it relates to the battered woman has become accepted as the basis of the battered woman syndrome. The future is hopeful as more effective ways of counseling are being developed to confront and eliminate violence inflicted upon wives by their husbands. The church can take advantage of these insights and practices to help the battered woman who comes for help for herself and her husband.

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CHAPTER 3: THEOLOGICAL ISSUES RELATED TO BATTERING

Theological beliefs become an integral part of one's being. These beliefs are very powerful for the Christian woman in a battering relationship. If a battered woman's religious convictions lead her to believe that woman is subordinate, that marriage is inviolable, or that suffering is the lot of the faithful, then those convictions have the sanction of God. She does not want to oppose God so she obeys, stays, and suffers.

We have seen from the sociological and psychological perspectives that the patriarchal order and sexism provide an ideology that allows battering to "keep a woman in her place." Religion plays its role in supporting the patriarchal order and traditional ideology. The Dobashes, sociologists in the field of domestic violence, make this evaluation:

The seeds of wife beating lie in the subordination of females and in their subjection to male authority and control. This relationship between women and men has been institutionalized in the structure of the patriarchal family and is supported by the economic and political institutions and by a belief system, including a religious one, that makes such relationships seem natural, morally just, and sacred.¹ (emphasis mine)

Christianity, as well as most other religions, has provided the ideological and moral supports for patriarchal marriage, rationalized it, and actively taught men and women to fit into this form of marriage.²

The way one interprets the Bible, particularly in relation to women, is critical for a battered woman who

already believes a patriarchal and sexist ideology. Using Scripture to support the subordination of women just keeps her believing that those ideologies come from God. Views of God as only male, suffering as virtuous, forgiveness without justice, and divorce as sin help to keep a battered woman in her abusive situation. We need to broaden our interpretation of Scripture to recognize that the Bible uses many other images of God than just those that are male. We need to see that the Bible also speaks of healing for sufferers and forgiveness with repentance and reconciliation. We need to see that divorce can be an option to free for new life. These views can help to liberate a woman from the bondage of a battering relationship.

Biblical Interpretation.

When one has a world view of sexism and patriarchy as legitimate and "God's will," then the lenses through which one interprets Scripture will mean that the subordination of women has divine sanction and the Scripture supports it. Although we are aware that the Bible comes to us out of a patriarchal context, it is the interpretation of certain texts for us today that presents a problem for women. It is the legitimizing of patriarchy by interpreting certain passages through the eyes of patriarchy that puts women under the rule of men.

A belief in the subordination of women is supported

by an interpretation of the Genesis 2 account of the creation story. Woman was created second as a "helpmeet" and therefore subordinate. The fall is blamed on Eve as temptress. The woman's punishment for this was subjection to her husband.

To the woman he (God) said, "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." (Gen. 3: 16)

The New Testament divine sanction for the subordination of women in marriage comes from passages attributed to Paul:

Wives be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its savior. As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands" (Eph. 5:22-24).

These passages are not the only ones that relate to women and subordination, but these are the most important ones. Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite states

...that these verses were the undergirding of a patriarchal ideology holding as a matter of course that the subjection of women to their husbands was just and, indeed, sacred. In fact, the verses served to legitimate the patriarchal structures of the Palestinian family; yet their literal meaning has continued to be normative for the church.³

The biblical criticism which developed in the nineteenth century began to offer alternative interpretations to the literalistic biblicism. Elizabeth Cady Stanton took advantage of these new learnings. As a avowed feminist interested in the liberation of women, she

had protested the inequality of women in civil, political, and religious institutions and had been referred to the Bible for an answer. The clergymen told the feminists that the Bible gave women freedoms but clearly marked out their sphere of action. Stanton challenged the oppressive teachings of the institutions of her day, including the church and its Scripture. She gathered women scholars and the few women ministers of her day and, using the latest tools in biblical criticism, published the Woman's Bible in 1895. The work was rejected by the church because it challenged the belief that God ordained woman to be subordinate. It was also unaccepted by some feminists because of its radical nature. For fifty years it was out of print, but was republished in 1974 so is available to women today. The publishers call it a "women's talmud" for it is a interpretive commentary on the passages having to do with women.⁴ The Woman's Bible stands as an important historic document, for it is the first major contribution of women to the interpretation of Scripture that challenges the traditional view of the subordination of women. In the introduction to the Bible Stanton states:

From the inauguration of the movement for woman's emancipation the Bible has been used to hold her in the "divinely ordained sphere," prescribed in the Old and New Testaments... How can woman's position be changed from that of a subordinate to an equal, without opposition, without the broadest of all the questions involved in her present degradation? For so far-reaching and momentous a reform as her complete independence, an entire revolution in all existing institutions is inevitable.⁵

The Woman's Bible took passages that had to do with women and gave commentary on them. On Genesis Chapter 1 the commentary states:

As to woman's subjection, on which both the canon and the civil law delight to dwell, it is important to note that equal dominion is given to woman over every living thing, but not one word is said giving man dominion over woman.⁶

The commentary on Genesis Chapter 2 is a reversal of what had traditionally been taught.

In v. 23 Adam proclaims the eternal oneness of the happy pair, "This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh;" no hint of her subordination. How could men, admitting these words to be divine revelation, ever have preached the subjection of women!...

The assertion of the supremacy of the woman in the marriage relation is contained in v. 24: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and cleave unto his wife." Nothing is said of the headship of man, but he is commanded to make her the head of the household, the home, a rule followed for centuries under the Matriarchate.⁷

Phyllis Tribe, a contemporary scholar, is restudying the passages used to support subordination of women. She explains her hermeneutic.

Within scripture, my topical clue is a text: the image of God male and female. To interpret this topic, my methodological clue is rhetorical criticism. Outside scripture, my hermeneutical clue is an issue: feminism as a critique of culture.⁸

Tribe illustrates her methodology by working with one text, Genesis 1:27:

And God created humankind in his image;
in the image of God created he him;
male and female created he them.

The first task is to look at the context of the text. God

created humankind on the sixth day after all the rest of creation. The account shows unique features in the making of humankind: only humankind is made in the image of God, only humankind is sexually designated male and female, only to humankind does God grant dominion over all the earth, and only to humankind does God speak directly in the first person.⁹

Next Tribble looks at the text in context. To adequately interpret Genesis 1:27 one must be sensitive to poetic language. Being aware of parallelism opens up new meanings. The text moves from a singular form for humanity, "he", to the plural, "them", specifically "male and female", which indicates sexual differentiation from the beginning. Tribble concludes that ha-'adam is not one single creature who is both male and female, but rather two creatures, one male and one female. She also concludes that sexual differentiation does not mean hierarchy. As created simultaneously, neither male nor female has power over the other. Both are given equal power. She notices that even though the context identifies two responsibilities for humankind, it does not designate which sex should accomplish the tasks. There is implicit freedom.¹⁰

Lastly the text provides a topical clue for the study of the image of God. The metaphor of the image of God as "male and female" are part of a network of metaphors.

For instance, metaphors such as God the father (Ps. 103:13), the husband (Hos. 2:16), the king

(Ps. 98:6), and the warrior (Exod. 15:3) are diverse and partial expressions of the image of God male. By the same token, metaphors such as God the pregnant woman (Isa. 42:14), the mother (Isa 66:13), the midwife (Ps. 22:9), and the mistress (Ps. 123:2) are diverse and partial expressions of the image of God female.¹¹

Trible observes that all these partial metaphors involve societal roles which the metaphor organizes but does not necessarily promote. The Bible overwhelmingly favors male images for deity. Trible reminds us that the basic metaphor in Gen. 1:27 of the image of God male and female challenges us to correct the imbalance and investigate the female images of God.¹²

Trible traces the journey of a particular metaphor in the traditions of Israel. She focuses on one tradition (Genesis 2-3) which embodies male and female within the context of the goodness of creation. Male and female are created from one, "earth-creature." The word translated "helper" (ezer) which has traditionally been understood to mean subordinate and inferior, Trible shows to mean more accurately in Hebrew context, "companion."

To the contrary, this word (ezer) often describes God as the superior who creates and saves Israel....According to Jahweh God, what the earth creature needs is a companion, one who is neither subordinate nor superior; one who alleviates isolation through identity.¹³

Trible is showing us that by looking closely at Scripture and comparing the meanings of the Hebrew words, we can uncover a truer meaning than has been taught by tradition.

Present-day feminists are reinterpreting Scripture using the tools currently available that give us insights

into the culture and context of the biblical times. These women have a view that it is God's intention that men and women be partners together in an egalitarian relationship. The questions they ask of the biblical writers come from this perspective. For instance, Scanzoni and Hardesty challenge the view of Ephesians 5 that stresses the wife's subordination as divine order. They point out that the emphasis of the passage is mutual subordination, in contrast to the patriarchal order of the day which made women absolutely subordinate. The model of Christ as "head" indicates a beginning origin, or source rather than a hierarchichal domination. The sense is one of interrelationship.¹⁴

Elizabeth Fiorenza in her recently-published book reconstructing women's history in early Christianity, recognizes the Ephesians passage as part of a household code. The author is prescribing behavior for the Christians in a clearly patriarchal order which puts the wife in an inferior position. Fiorenza sees the author as modifying the patriarchal code by putting it in the context of Christian love. The husbands are commanded three times to love their wives. Jesus' commandment, "love your neighbor as yourself" (Mk. 12:31) is applied to the husband in the marriage relationship. Christ's self-giving love is held up as a model of love for the husband toward the wife. In this way patriarchal domination is radically questioned.¹⁵

Rosemary Reuther has another interpretation of the Ephesians passage. She thinks that trying to make this relationship of Christ and the Church a model of marriage is "contrived."

The author is caught midway between the Pauline eschatological vision of the Church and the reactionary direction of the household codes, which try to return the Christian Church to the models of historical patriarchy. The result is a contradiction that, nevertheless, for two thousand years has been preached to Christian couples as though it were a possible model of real marriage. This has been done by a selective interpretation that makes the text primarily a model of benevolent paternalism and female submission.¹⁶

These authors and scholars and others are continually contributing new information which help us see women's position and story in a new way. We need to be continually exposing ourselves to scholarship from a feminist perspective so that we break the old perspectives of patriarchal and sexist bias.

Feminist theology is a dimension of liberation theology. Beginning in the Latin American context, liberation theology is theology done from the perspective of those who are powerless in society. This is in contrast to traditional theology which is done from the perspective of white middle-class male. The Biblical traditions that are central to liberation theology are those of the slave people whom God called out of Egypt and the prophetic tradition of the Hebrews at the time of the exile. The prophets called into account those who were oppressing the poor. Liberation theology remembers the prophetic tradition of Jesus of

Nazareth who came to "preach good news to the poor...
 proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to
 the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed..."
 (Luke 4:18)

Letty Russell builds her feminist theology upon
 liberation theology which she defines as "an attempt to
 reflect upon the experience of oppression and our actions
 for the new creation for a more human society."¹⁷ Her
 liberation theology interprets the search for salvation as
 "journey toward freedom, as a process of self-liberation in
 community with others in the light of hope in God's
 promise."¹⁸

For the battered woman the good news is that God
 does not intend for anyone to be oppressed; that there is
 hope in the future; and that there is support (community) in
 the journey toward freedom. For her the good news may be
 hard to believe, for she has been in bondage so long to the
 belief that she should be subordinate and that she deserves
 to be beaten.

The images that Russell uses are the biblical
 stories of the Exodus and the Resurrection. The Exodus is
 the story of the slave people oppressed in Egypt being led
 to freedom by God. They become a new people. The journey
 is a process. Jesus is the model of the new humanity.

It continues in the story of the One who came as a
representative of the new humanity who points us toward
 the goal of God's liberating action. And it frees us to
 participate in becoming, ourselves, representatives of

that new life in which there will be neither oppressor nor oppressed, but only man and woman in the process of liberation.¹⁹

The vision of the new humanity is one of partnership, where women and men will serve each other and work together in mission to bring liberation to all. This is hard to do in a world where human structures are hierarchical.

Submission is in fact an element of sinfulness in which women refuse to accept their full created status as partners with men in the work of God's mission in the world.²⁰

Thistlethwaite shows how the battered woman has the possibility for change in belief and then in action as she relates to Juan Luis Segundo's "hermeneutic circle". There are four elements to his circle:

Firstly, there is our way of experiencing reality, which leads us to ideological suspicions. Secondly, there is the application of our ideological suspicions to the whole ideological super-structure in general and to theology in particular. Thirdly, there comes a new way of experiencing theological reality that leads us to exegetical suspicion, that is, to the suspicion that the prevailing interpretation of the Bible has not taken important pieces of data into account. Fourthly, we have our new hermeneutic, that is, our new way of interpreting the fountain head of our faith (i.e., Scripture) with the new elements at our disposal.²¹

A battered woman believes that the Bible says what she has been taught it says - that women are inferior and subordinate to husband and that she must accept a life of pain as her lot. She may then, because of some experience, question that belief. It may be when her husband starts beating one of the children, or it may be when she thinks she will be killed by his violence. It may be some

influence from the outside such as a friend's comment, an article on wife-battering, or hopefully, a sermon on the subject, that she begins to question her belief.

Unfortunately, many women who question are told by their churches that to question subordination is rebellion and pride. Some women then stop questioning. Others continue in Segundo's circle and begin to question a biblical exegesis that uses power against them. They use the new information at their disposal to form a new hermeneutic and discover that the Bible does not support wife-battering. They begin to see that the Scriptures are more on their side than they had ever thought possible.

Thistlethwaite concludes the application of the battered wife to the hermeneutical circle.

The painful process of entering the hermeneutical circle gives us access to the realization that the Bible is written from the perspective of the powerless. The chosen of God are a rag-tag band of runaway slaves. God, by this identification with Israel, is revealed as one who sides with those who are out of power.²²

The message of both the Old and New Testaments is that God cares for the downtrodden, the widows, the orphans. God passes judgement on those who oppress.

"It is you who have devoured the vineyard,
the spoil of the poor is in your houses.
What do you mean by crushing my people,
by grinding the face of the poor?"
says the Lord God of host.. (Isaiah 3:14,15)

Jesus demonstrated God's love to the poor and outcast as he healed and empowered them to live new lives. Luke records him particularly reaching out to women in the

stories of the the healing of Peter's mother in law (Luke 5:38,39), the woman with the issue of blood (Luke 9:43-48), and the woman with the bent-over back (Luke 13:10-17). We see Jesus' care in his acceptance of the sinner woman who anointed his feet (Luke 7:36-50), and in his healing of the son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:11-17).

As Jesus identified with the poor, so must we in the church do the same. We must reach out to establish justice for those who are in unjust situations. Battered women are in an unjust power situation where their husbands are abusing them by exerting physical power to keep them "under control," or punishing them for not "keeping in line."

In using a new hermeneutic we challenge both the writers of Scripture and the exegesis. We look at the important role social relationships have had in shaping our previous biases. We look at the power structures and ask if justice is being done.

David Trembly tells a story that we hope will not be repeated. A battered woman somehow found courage to leave her husband although her family and church advised against it. The church's words were:

It's your duty. A woman must bear the prime responsibility for keeping her family intact. Besides, who knows what God's will is in this matter? Perhaps God is using you as a witness to save your husband."²³

The woman remarried and was very happy. A tragedy occurred where the woman was severely burned. The church members came to her in the hospital saying,

This is God's justice. We warned you not to get a divorce. Now you are suffering for your sin. But God still loves you, and we do too. If you'll only repent, everyone will be overjoyed to welcome you back to your home.²⁴

We need to continue to examine our view of Scripture to insure that the lenses we wear do not distort the truth of God's message.

The Maleness of God

Mary Daly has critiqued Christianity as a patriarchal religion contributing to the subordination and oppression of women. As she very aptly puts it, "if God is male, then the male is God."¹⁹ Although most scholars would deny the male sexuality of God, it is very clear that the predominant images of God in Christian religion have been male, especially evident in the image of God as Father. Daly continues.

If God in "his" heaven is a father ruling "his" people, then it is in the "nature" of things and according to divine plan and the order of the universe that society be male-dominated...the husband dominating his wife represents God "himself."²⁶

The sex-role stereotypes that are evident in patriarchy have resulted in a polarization of human qualities into "masculine" and "feminine."

The image of the person in authority and the accepted understanding of "his" role has corresponded to the eternal masculine stereotype, which implies hyper-rationality,..."objectivity," aggressivity, the possession of dominating and manipulative attitudes toward persons and the environment, and the tendency to construct boundaries between the self...and "the Other."²⁷

The batterer is able with this theology to justify his aggression toward his wife. His behavior is consistent with the dominant male stereotype.

Daly sees the "male" God acting in three ways to legitimate the status quo in which women are victimized. First, theologians assert the subordination of women to be God's will. Theologians throughout the centuries have done this even to the twentieth century with Barth, Bonhoeffer and Reinhold Niebuhr.²⁸

Second, the male symbolism for God is used to describe human relationship to God. Daly quotes Gregory Baum in Man Becoming (1970) to illustrate.

To believe that God is Father is to become aware of oneself not as a stranger, not as an outsider or an alienated person, but as a son who belongs or a person appointed to a marvelous destiny, which he shares with the whole community. To believe that God is Father means to be able to say "we" in regard to all men.²⁹

How does woman "share" with the community in this image?

She does not belong. Daly responds to Baum.

A woman whose consciousness has been aroused can say that such language makes her aware of herself as a stranger, as an outsider, as an alienated person, not as a daughter who belongs or who is appointed to a marvelous destiny.. She cannot belong to this without assenting to her own lobotomy.³⁰

Third, Daly asserts that even when the language about God is nonsexist, the situation is oppressive. The implication is that there is no problem of sexism. It encourages detachment from the reality of struggle against the oppressive structures.³¹

Daly has an alternative for the patriarchal male God. She does not want to put a name on God, to "objectify" God.³² In contrast, Daly says, "the God who is power of being acts as a moral power summoning women and men to act out of our deepest hope and to become who we can be."³³

Women being in the image of a God who is "Be-ing" then are free to become what they can be. They no longer are tied to sex-role stereotypes. Confronting their own being can be very scary when they have been accustomed to prescribed roles. Battered women breaking out of roles and into their own being confront something new and revolutionary.

Daly is aware that the breaking out cannot happen on an individual basis without the support of the community.

The burst of anger and creativity made possible in the presence of one's sisters is an experience of becoming whole, of overcoming the division within the self that makes nothingness block the dynamism of being.³⁴

Daly has seen the male incarnation of God in the male Jesus being used for the oppression of women. Some ministers and priests still use the unique male incarnation as a place to begin for arguments for male supremacy.³⁵

Daly proposes a new image:

...the exclusively masculine symbols for the ideal of "incarnation" or for the idea of the human search for fulfillment will not do....no adequate models can be taken from the past....The point is not to deny that a revelatory event took place in the encounter with the person Jesus. Rather, It is to affirm that the creative presence of the Verb can be revealed at every historical moment, in every person and culture.³⁶

Other feminist theologians are recognizing the destructiveness of the totally masculine images of God to females. They however in contrast to Daly see redemptive values to Scripture and are finding feminine images in the biblical literature.

Sallie McFague warns us that to absolutize any one image of God is to be idolatrous. She points out that the images and metaphors we have are very important. If our metaphors of God are not consistent with our reality, they become meaningless.³⁷ For instance, if a battered woman has been abused as a child, as many have, her image of God as Father will strike terror rather than comfort. The metaphor of God as Father that Jesus used was a radical one in his day. "Abba" was a term of endearment that meant closeness in relationship. The meaning of the metaphor of Father is a close loving relationship, expressing caring, nearness, and comfort.

McFague challenges us to seek new metaphors that will bring fresh meaning and will be inclusive. She sees the parental models, whether maternal or paternal as insufficient. She offers the metaphor of God as "friend."³⁸ The image is found in the Bible - "But, you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, who I have chosen, race of Abraham, my friend." (Isa 41:18) Jesus is portrayed as "friend of sinners," and as one who lays down his life for his friends. (John 15:13) God as friend is one who stands

along side, one who shares in the suffering, one who empowers. For the battered woman, God as friend can be one who stands alongside as she "becomes." The categories of subordination are broken, for friends are not subordinate.

The image of God as exclusively male needs to be broadened to include more liberating images that will free a battered woman from her oppressive situation. The liberating aspects of Jesus and his ministry can be claimed to help in this process.

The Son as Suffering Servant

A theological teaching that works to support a woman staying in a battering relationship and continuing to tolerate and accept abuse from her partner is that of the view of Jesus the Son as a suffering servant. If Jesus is our model, then we too will be suffering servants. Some biblical passages used to support this view are:

And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.
Phil. 2:8

Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered... Hebrews 5:8

For one is approved if, mindful of God, he endures pain while suffering unjustly. For what credit is it, if when you do wrong and are beaten for it you take it patiently? But if when you do right and suffer for it you take it patiently, you have God's approval. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. 1 Peter 2: 19-21

... Likewise you wives, be submissive to your husbands, so that some, though they do not obey the word, may be

won without a word by the behavior of their wives, when they see your reverent and chaste behavior. 1 Peter 3:1

John Calvin expressed this traditional belief in a letter regarding a woman asking pastoral advice in an abusive marriage. He admonishes her to stay.

...to bear with patience the cross which God has seen fit to place upon her; and meanwhile not to deviate from the duty which she has before God to please her husband, but to be faithful whatever happens.³⁹

Reinhold Niebuhr, a contemporary twentieth-century theologian, has an ideal that comes out of the image of Jesus as self-sacrificing servant. He identifies sin with

...self assertion and love with selflessness...Love...is completely self-giving, taking no thought for its own interests but seeking only the good of the other. Love makes no value judgments concerning the other's worth; it demands neither merit in the other nor recompense for itself, but gives itself freely, fully, and without calculation. Love is unconditional forgiveness; concerning the one to whom it is given; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.⁴⁰

The battered woman believes Niebuhr's theology. She believes the promises of her batterer to reform. She thinks if she keeps trying she can be good for him.

Mary Daly writes about the sacrificial love in terms of scapegoat psychology.

The qualities that Christianity idealizes, especially for women, are also those of a victim: sacrificial love, passive acceptance of suffering, humility, meekness, etc. Since these are the qualities idealized in Jesus "who died for our sins," his functioning as a model reinforces the scapegoat syndrome for women. Given the victimized situation of the female in sexist society, these "virtues" are hardly the qualities that women should be encouraged to have.⁴¹

Evil cannot be owned as one's own, so it is projected onto

the scapegoat. The battered woman takes the evil of her husband as he projects his inability to handle his own inner stress onto her in the form of beatings.

Jesus' self-giving love was from a position of power as male and as Rabbi, and not from a position of subordination. As Rabbi, he challenged the male religious leadership. He confronted them with their injustices.

But woe to you Pharisees! for you tithe mint and rue and every herb, and neglect justice and the love of God; these you ought to have done, without neglecting the others...Woe to you lawyers also! for you lead men with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers. Luke 11:42,46.

Jesus' message to those in power was to be servant. In answer to a question on greatness, he reminded the disciples that the kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over their subjects. For Jesus the greatest in the kingdom was to be servant. He gave himself as model as one who serves. (Luke 22:24-27)

Jesus' ministry to the outcast was to lift them up to be whole. He announced it in Nazareth. (Luke 4:18,19) He demonstrated it by his healing of women, servants, children, lepers, the infirm and the poor, persons considered by society as lacking God's blessing.

The words of Peter regarding suffering intended to encourage a persecuted church to endure faithfully in spite of suffering. They were not meant to encourage women to endure beatings and abuse from their husbands. Why is it that male pastors tell the woman to go home and suffer and

not call to account the one who is causing the suffering, as Jesus did?

As we look at the life of Jesus as he related to women, we see him treating them with the same dignity as he treated men. We see him lifting them up to equal status. Jesus chose the woman at the well to be his evangelist. (John 5) He affirmed the devotion of the woman who crashed the party given in his honor. (Luke 7:36-50) We in the church need to be following the model of Jesus, lifting up the oppressed battered women and calling to account those who are abusing them.

Guilt, Forgiveness, Repentance, and Reconciliation

For a battered woman the issues of guilt, forgiveness, repentance and reconciliation loom very large. The battered woman experiences guilt when she says "if only" or, "I could have..." She is quick to accept the responsibility for her batterer's behavior. So many times she is told by her pastor that she should go home and forgive her abusive husband. If she desires to stay with her husband and work with him on their marriage, how does she forgive the beatings of several years, even though they have stopped. What is the meaning of forgiveness in her case? What does it mean for her husband to repent? If there are possibilities to build a marriage on the basis of non-violence, what is the meaning of reconciliation?

Sue Dunfee addresses the issue of guilt in an article challenging Reinhold Niebuhr's view of sin as pride. Dunfee sees the sin of hiding as the primary form of sin for woman.⁴² She takes it out from under the sin of pride and names it as that of which woman is most guilty.

And woman needs to assert that human sinfulness is not just the sin of pride, but is also the sin of hiding; that the God who judges human pride must also judge human hiding and passivity, not by demanding a sacrifice of the self, but by becoming the forgiven self to affirm her full humanity through grasping and claiming her call to freedom.⁴³

The battered woman may be hiding what she could become in a life of fear because of being beaten by her husband. To change the relationship by leaving or insisting that she will not be beaten any more is difficult. To move out of hiding is not an easy thing to do. Dunfee continues:

To confess her sin of hiding is a deeply threatening thing for any woman to do. We have believed for so long that femininity and assertiveness cannot be held together, that we persist in hiding behind husband/fathers/children/bosses, and in the busyness of being somebody's "something" rather than in the demanding task of becoming who we are.⁴⁴

The battered woman may be told by her pastor or well-meaning friends and relatives that she should forgive her husband for beating her. In popular piety this may mean going back as if nothing ever happened. She may be reminded of Jesus' model of forgiveness from the cross as he said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34). She may also be reminded that Jesus told us to forgive "seventy times seven." (Matt 18:21,22)

Sometimes forgiveness is portrayed as going into one's closet and going through a transaction with God to "forgive" the offending person. It is not necessary to make any contact with the offending person. The forgiveness is an issue between God and the forgiver. The dictionary reflects the popular notion of forgiveness as it defines it as, "to cease to feel resentment against (an offender)."⁴⁵

This private view of forgiveness is one aspect of forgiveness where the battered woman can deal with her own guilt feelings and be affirmed that she is an important person made in the image of God. She can receive forgiveness for her "sin of hiding" as she opens herself to being made into "a new creation" (1 Cor. 5:17). If she has left her batterer or sees no way of interacting with him, she will need to deal with her feelings of anger and guilt apart from him. This privatized aspect of forgiveness is a part of forgiveness, but only a part.

This part of dealing with forgiveness personally on the part of the battered woman cannot be rushed. She must reshape herself from one who has been devalued to one who has value in the sight of God. This takes time and the support of community.

For the battered woman forgiveness is going from a state of having the experience of being battered control her life to a whole new stance of being able to move on to new experiences. Marie Fortune suggests a new vision.

I will not longer allow this experience to dominate my life. I will not let it continue to make me feel bad about myself. I will not let it limit my ability to love and trust others in my life. I will not let my memory of the experience continue to victimize and control me.⁴⁶

Forgiveness means recognizing the humanness of the batterer and that both she and he are made in the image of God.

Forgiveness does not mean condoning his behavior or excusing it, but it does mean being able to accept God's gift of the future possibilities in spite of what has happened.

A complete view of forgiveness takes into account the dynamic of repentance. A look at the meaning of forgiveness and repentance in the Bible may help us to reframe our theology.

Forgiveness is throughout conditional upon repentance, a word which quite clearly in its OT and NT equivalents involves a change of mind and intention.... For Jesus Christ, and therefore for the Christian, there is no limit to forgiveness, assuming always that there is true repentance on the part of the forgiven one.⁴⁷

For forgiveness to be complete, there must be confession and repentance on the part of the offender. Batterers have a tendency to minimize and deny the damage they have done to their women. It is necessary for the damage done to be confronted and confessed for repentance to begin. Repentance means making the wrong right. It means doing what ever is necessary to change.

Alan Richardson helps us with some biblical meanings of repentance. In the Old Testament the idea of repentance is expressed by the words, "turn," or "return."

...turning means much more than a mere change of mind, though it includes this; it represents a reorientation of one's whole life and personality, which includes the adoption of a whole new ethical line of conduct, a forsaking of sin and a turning to righteousness.⁴⁸

The New Testament echoes this emphasis.

..."repent" in its NT usage implies much more than a mere "change of mind"; it involves a whole reorientation of the personality, a "conversion".⁴⁹

The model for the Lukan community was to deal with offenses of individuals in the community of faith; to confront and to judge and bring reconciliation. If the offender was not willing to deal with the offense, that one was cast out of the community.

If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Luke 18:15-17

In relating this to the battered woman and her husband, we see that first of all for repentance to occur there must be a change of mind on the part of both. For the woman it is the sin of hiding. For the man it is perhaps the sin of pride and acknowledging the reality of his behavior. The change of mind must result in a change of life. This means more than good intentions. It means definite changes in behavior.

A complete understanding of reconciliation will include justice. Reconciliation for Fortune includes a

concept of justice. Reconciliation means

...to renew a broken relationship on new terms, and to heal the injury of broken trust which has resulted from an offense inflicted by one person on another. If justice is the right relation between persons, then reconciliation is the making of justice where there was injustice.⁵⁰

For the battered woman it will mean the recognition of her rights to freedom from fear of a beating.

David Augsburger works with forgiveness, repentance and reconciliation. His statements are very helpful in summarizing these concepts.

Forgiveness is a brother-brother, sister-sister process, a two-way mutual interaction of resolving differences and recreating relationships between persons of equal worth.⁵¹

Repentance is owning what was in full acknowledgment of the past and it is choosing what will be in open responsibility for one's behavior in the future....In repentance past injuries are fully recognized, future intentions are truly genuine, and right relationships are now being expressed and experienced with each other.⁵²

Augsburger puts forgiveness in the context of community. Confrontation and reconciliation take place there.

A dynamic of forgiveness is presented by Vernon Johnson that includes a concept of restoration. Johnson works with alcoholics who have some of the same dynamics of batterers, denial and minimizing of the damage they do. Many batterers are also alcohol and drug abusers. Johnson has found that one of the most effective ways to deal with alcoholics is for the community, family, friends, and employer to confront the individual with his/her

destructive behavior to encourage and even force him/her to get help. A part of the forgiveness and reconciliation is for the alcoholic to pay for any damage done when in the alcoholic state.⁵³

This principle can be remembered when dealing with the reconciliation of the batterer and his wife. Restoration may need to be a part of the reconciliation. A biblical model is given to us in the story of Zaccheus, who when he was converted said, "...if I have defrauded any one of anything, I restore it fourfold." (Luke 19:8)

Marriage and Divorce

Battered women tend to believe strongly in the permanency of marriage. One of the reasons they stay in their battering relationships is that their religious beliefs support their staying by condemning divorce. One woman testified:

We were brought up to believe that it was more of a sin to divorce than to do anything else...That's what was instilled in us at church. Separation was just as bad. Unheard of.⁵⁴

An important theological issue for battered woman is the view of life-long marriage as ordained by God. The Roman Catholic church views marriage as a sacrament which must not be broken. The Protestant church has long had the ideal of "until death do us part" which has been repeated in the marriage vow. The conservative branch of the church would say "divorce is sin." It is only recently that the

church anywhere has accepted divorced persons as legitimate members of the community. The theological beliefs about divorce reinforce the stigma that our culture as a whole places on divorce.

The view of marriage as an institution to be preserved at all costs is prevalent among some pastors who counsel battered women.

Pastor Jim paused, choosing his words carefully. He knew this sort of thing went on - wife abuse - but he had never before encountered it personally. They hadn't taught it in seminary. "Claire," he said, "what ever you do, make sure you tell your lawyer that his job, and my job, is to save marriages."

Claire was stunned. Had she not told him of all that had gone on for eighteen years of marriage? Did he need an entire blow-by-blow account of the hundreds of beatings through the years? Did he really think Claire was giving up this marriage too soon?

Suddenly Claire felt something in addition to her aches and intense exhaustion.

Guilt.⁵⁵

This view of marriage makes it almost impossible for a woman to leave a marriage if she has that kind of religious commitment. Her tradition, her church, her pastor, and her family hold her there. She suffers incredible guilt if she goes against her tradition even if it is to save her life.

An alternative view to the saving of marriages is to remember Jesus' injunction, "The Sabbath was made for humanity, not humanity for the Sabbath." (Mark 2:27) The institutions ordained by God are made for our benefit. Marriage is to be for the mutual benefit and support of the members, not for opportunity for the stronger to do violence

to the weaker. We have numerous stories where Jesus went against the Sabbath institution of his day to care for individuals who were being oppressed by it. He healed the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath; (Luke 6:6-11) and the bent over woman. (Luke 13:10-17) He broke a Sabbath rule when he let his disciples pluck grain to eat on the Sabbath. (Luke 6:1-5)

Those who advocate the divine institution of life-long marriage quote Jesus' words in the gospels as authority.

He (Jesus) answered, "Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female and said, 'for this reason man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall become one'? So they are no longer two but one. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder." (Matt 19:4,5)

What needs to be considered in approaching the biblical texts is the specific context and also how the believing community, Israel and the church, has dealt with the issue of divorce throughout history.

Myrna and Robert Kysar investigated the biblical teachings on divorce and remarriage in the light of the best modern critical scholarship in an attempt to apply those teachings to the ministry of the church. The authors' biblical interpretation is shaped by the presuppositions of the culture in which the texts were written and the authors' own cultural presuppositions.⁵⁶

They found the Old Testament passages on divorce to

indicate that divorce was a common practice in Hebrew society. The legislative passages sought to minimize the cruelty that resulted from divorce and provide guidelines for divorce to be done as humanely as possible. Nowhere is divorce prohibited.⁵⁷

The Kysars see parallels in the way both Jesus and Paul handle the issue of divorce .

Both Paul and Jesus seem to view divorce as a violation of God's intention for marriage. Divorce and remarriage deny the spiritual union that God desires for husband and wife. However, both Paul and Jesus stress generally the fact of God's radical love and forgiveness. Both contend that where there is a violation of God's intention for marriage - where God's creation is distorted by human failure - there is sin, but sin that is pardoned by the love of God.⁵⁸

The Matthew passage (p. 99) speaks to a situation where marriage was being treated lightly. A school of rabbis was interpreting Torah in such a way that a man could divorce his wife for such a thing as not salting his soup. Jesus' words were to emphasize marriage of commitment. The Kysars observe:

The early Christians did not attempt to make the words of Jesus into absolute, inviolable law for their lives. They did not understand the word of Jesus to be binding upon them in every situation. Rather, they took that exhortation as a guide for their practice.⁵⁹

Today we have a reversal of the situation in Jesus' day. Battered women have such a commitment to marriage that they feel they cannot leave even though their lives may be in danger. The Kysars advise us:

Marriage was made for humans; not humans for marriage. Therefore, when marriage fails to enhance and further

the total well-being of the humans involved, it must be dissolved. The injunction against divorce must not be enforced with a strictness that results in the destruction of human personality and potential.⁶⁰

When we are encountering a battered woman in the church, perhaps we can follow the pattern of Jesus and Paul and consider the individual more than the institution. When a husband refuses to get help and stop battering, then a woman can be helped to see divorce as an option that will be accepted by God and the church.

Those who give pastoral care to battered women need to be aware of the theological beliefs that work to hold these women in their abusive situations. It is our job to challenge these beliefs and offer new beliefs that are liberating. We can use our theology to empower these women to new hope and new life.

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CHAPTER 4: PASTORAL CARE OF THE BATTERED WOMAN

The church is a community that has the potential to be of great help to the battered woman. It is the place where she may seek help for her situation. The pastor, as leader, has opportunities both directly and indirectly to provide that help and support. I will describe methods of pastoral care that will be a working manual for pastors, so I will direct my suggestions to the pastor.

Most of the pastors serving in the church are male, although women are entering the field more and more. The roles of the male and female pastor will be different in relation to the battered woman. If you are a male pastor, you can be an advocate and support to the battered woman. You can put her in contact with resources and with female counselors and role models. If you are a female pastor you may be a role model to a battered woman by your very presence. You have an advantage as a female, if your consciousness is raised, to understand some of the battered woman's experience from the inside, from your own struggle with sexism and oppression.

Because the very nature of pastoring makes it difficult and impractical to spend more than a very few sessions in serious counseling with a parishioner, both male and female pastors do better to recommend counselors and other resources to the battered woman. You then can be in the background maintaining contact and support as she

struggles to determine her life in a battering context.

Self-Preparation of the Pastor

You have been influenced by your sociological, psychological, and theological settings and have assumptions and ideologies that are shaped by those influences. These assumptions and beliefs need to be examined and challenged to see how they impact the care of the battered woman.

1. World view: If you are white and male, you will especially need to be aware of the gap between you and the battered woman in terms of world view.¹ You as a white male are a member of the dominant culture. Most theologies and psychologies are written from that vantage point. It will be helpful to familiarize yourself with points of view from the underside. If you are a female pastor may have trouble understanding the helplessness of some battered women for you may be one who has "made the system work" for yourself. Your task will be one of empowering the battered woman to begin to make some decisions that will be helpful to her. Feminist theology and psychology and liberation theology will help to expand the perspective of both male and female pastors. (See Appendix A.)

1. Sexism: As a pastor you need to be aware of the pervasiveness of sexism. The basis of sexism is the belief in inherent male superiority and privilege and therefore of female inferiority and subordination. The conditioning that

males are supposed to perform certain social tasks and fulfill certain roles and females other social tasks and roles is based on sexism. Included in this sexism is the message that "boys are better than girls." Males tend to have the leadership roles and females the support roles in the church.

2. Patriarchy: As a pastor you need an increased awareness of the reality of patriarchy, of its long history and deep roots in our culture and an awareness of how it has been institutionalized in the church. Women have had to struggle to begin to gain greater opportunity for ministry in the church.²

3. Domestic violence: As a pastor you must become aware that domestic violence exists in the church, even among some of the most "respected" members and leaders. It is easy to think that just because a church may be white, middle class and suburban, violence does not exist. The battered women will be there. Many will be active leaders. Some of their husbands will be there also.

4. Resources: You as pastor need to become familiar with the shelter in the area and what services it offers. The local chapter of the National Organization of Women or the local social service agencies should be able to recommend the shelter organization. Many shelters have hot lines and offer training for hot line volunteers. Many have persons who would be willing to speak on the subject of wife

abuse to church groups. Find out how the police force in your town deals with domestic violence. Locate lawyers and counselors (preferably woman with raised consciousnesses) who have had experience with wife abuse. Shelter people should be able to help here. Familiarize yourself with the laws that affect wives. For instance, it is the against the law in most states for a man to assault his wife. (See Appendix B)

The pastors of Centerville were gathered at their monthly ministerial meeting. Sam Johnson of Community Church shared a concern he had about a woman who had come to him for counsel on what to do about her husband beating her. He had heard about domestic violence but had not had any direct contact with the problem. He didn't know how to handle the situation. He had given her a few words of comfort and had told her he would meet with her again. The other ministers shared similar experiences. They discussed how they might learn more about the problem so they might help the women in their churches. Pastor Sue Jones of Valley View Church mentioned the women's shelter in the area. Maybe they could get some information that would be helpful. Sue was commissioned to contact the shelter and bring back information to the group.

Sue phoned the hotline and through it was able to make contact with the director of the center, Janet Thomas. Janet pleased to learn that the ministers in the city were

interested in being informed about the plight of battered women. She offered to speak to the ministerial association about the shelter and the subject of battered women.

Sue reported back to her association with Janet's offer. The group enthusiastically agreed to have her come to speak the next month. Janet talked to the group about the general subject of battered women and answered questions. She told about the work of the shelter and the needs for support. She brought her pamphlets and resources and was able to share information on counselors and lawyers who are have worked with battered women. The resource list also included legal aid and social services available to these women in need.

Sam Johnson listened intently to all the information he was receiving with his parishioner who was experiencing battering in mind. He was gaining a new perspective on her dilemma. He was beginning to get some handles on how he could help her. He also learned that another of his parishioners, Betty Brown, was a regular volunteer on the shelter hot line.

Consciousness Raising for the Whole Church

As a pastor you can educate the congregation to the realities of domestic violence and by example create a climate where all women including battered woman will find refuge and as sense of belonging and support.

1. Worship: Utilize female participation in worship leadership. Eliminate exclusive masculine language for God and include feminine or nonsexist images for God. There are many resources available that give new words to old hymn tunes, litanies, prayers, and benedictions that offer alternatives to traditional worship responses. (See Appendix C) They present new images that free worshipers to new visions of being.

2. Preaching: If your consciousness has been raised, the effect should show in your sermons. Keep the battered woman in mind as you prepare. She will be there as you preach about justice, freedom, violence, empowerment and the image of God. Use illustrations that include women. If you have a sermon feedback group or persons who give input to your sermon preparation, be sure you include some women in your groups.

2. Support the observance of a week protesting domestic violence (the first week in October) by including articles on the subject in the church newsletter. The sermon that week could include reference to the issue of domestic violence. Your local newspaper should be able to provide illustrative material.

3. Locate speakers on the subject of wife abuse and domestic violence from the local college, seminary, or shelters to speak to youth groups, adult education classes, couples groups, singles groups, social groups, and women's

groups in the church.

4. Have a seminar about domestic violence, dealing with the psychological and theological issues.

5. Encourage the use of gifts across the usual lines of sex-role stereotyping; i.e., men caring for infants and young children; a woman as chair of trustees.

6. Work toward shared ministry rather than hierarchical ministry. Is there a chain of command in church staff relationships or is it collegial? Are assignments based on gifts and negotiated tasks or are tasks delegated "from on high"? Is the chair of a committee "in charge" or do all members accept the responsibility for what happens in committee? Are decisions processed by those affected by them or determined by the "one in charge?"

7. Have workshops on conflict resolution, learning effective nonviolent ways to resolve conflict. Model this in your work with committees and individuals.

8. Encourage the formation of young married parenting study groups using such materials as Parenting with Peace and Justice.³ These kinds of groups make it possible for parents who want another ideology than patriarchy, to explore other options and work together to build a family based on peace, justice, and equality.

9. In seminars with youth and singles on dating, lay out the realities of patriarchy and sexism and work toward equality of value of persons. Work toward nonviolent ways

of conflict resolution in intimate relationships.

10. In individual premarital counseling and/or premarital groups, raise the issue of violence to help couples be aware of the violence implicit in our culture and violence that may have been in their families of origin.

Here are some questions to raise in the course of the sessions you have with the couple or couples.

a. In helping the couple get acquainted with their own and each other's family of origin, raise the question of violence by asking if there was any physical violence, any hitting, slapping, or spanking. Almost every person will have had some experience with spanking because it is so universally accepted in our culture. Ask each person to reflect on how that felt, how being hit made them feel, and how they evaluate the action now.

b. How does each member of the couple regard the use of violence in their up-coming marriage? Is it acceptable and available as a "last resort"? Discuss the issue of the violation of rights. Does anyone have the right to invade another's body space by violence?

c. How does each regard sex-role expectations? Does each have the freedom to develop his/her gifts? Talk about what the role expectations were in the families of origin and how each wants to carry that out in this marriage. Have the couple talk about what each wants to do in life in terms of education, children, and career.

d. How does each deal with power? Is it used for support and nurture, or for coercion to get one's own way? Help couples learn how to increase justice and equality in their marriage. Teach them how to renegotiate their marriage agreement (contract or covenant) regularly to increase both justice and satisfaction in the relationship. The Intentional Marriage Model of communicating is one tool that is helpful.⁴

e. How much is each able to take responsibility for his/her own feelings and actions and not assume the responsibility for the other? Plan some communication exercises so the couples can learn to express feelings to each other clearly. The IMM will help here.

f. How does each potential parent view disciplining of children? Talk about how each was disciplined as a child. Give some information on recent child-rearing techniques.⁵

g. What plans do the couple have for building a community of support for themselves? Lay the groundwork for an attitude of the couple deliberately seeking out a community of faith to become a part of. Stress the importance of this support and the importance of asking for help when they are in crisis. Throughout this process establish rapport with the couple so that they will feel free to come for help when they need it.

Outreach and Mission

1. Encourage groups in the church to support the shelter in your area by: working on the hot line, giving money, donating gifts of goods and/or food that the shelter might need.

2. Encourage the formation of a committee or task force to educate the congregation and recruit volunteers for service.

3. Open the church facilities for use by such self-help groups as Alcoholics Anonymous, Alanon, Parents Anonymous, and Batterers Anonymous.

Direct Support for Women

1. Encourage women's support groups of all kinds - study groups, personal growth groups, sharing groups, and exercise groups. When a woman comes with an idea for a group, encourage her to start one for herself and invite friends. She may invite someone to share the leadership with her. Offer her support with publicity from the pulpit and space in the church newsletter.

2. Encourage interested women to plan retreats for women. Suggest a workshop on wife abuse. Suggest speakers who will have a message urging women to develop their gifts as they were given by God rather than exhorting obedience to a role ascribed by society or "by God."

3. If there is one battered woman who needs a group,

consider starting one because there are probably several more ready to join her. Find a qualified woman who has had some experience with battered women to lead it. A qualified leader is one who has had some experience with leading groups and has had some training in counseling skills. This person could be someone from a church lay counseling center. If there is not someone you know in your church who is qualified, use your shelter leadership to start a search for one. It will be important to find a leader that has sensitivity to the theological issues Christian women will raise. A local pastoral counseling center may have such women available.

4. Find persons who would be willing to take in a battered woman and/or her children on a short-term basis in case of emergency. You would use these homes only as a last resort if a woman could not get into a shelter or find other refuge. It would be important to keep the locations of these emergency homes secret to protect both the hosts and the battered women, for many times husbands seek out their women and are violent to those attempting to help them.

Let's return to the case of Pastor Sam Johnson.

When Sam got back to the church from the ministerial meeting he called Betty and shared his experience with her.

"Betty, I just got back from ministerial meeting where we heard Janet Thomas from the shelter speak. I was pleased to learn that you are volunteering for the hot line.

That is a very important ministry."

"Pastor, I'm so glad you are interested in what the shelter is doing. I have found my work very rewarding."

"Betty, I recently had a woman come to me for help because her husband was beating her and I didn't know what to do. I wonder if I might enlist your help."

"Certainly, Sam, I'll help if I can?"

"Well, I thought I might see if this woman who has come to me might be willing to have you talk with her. You certainly have your fingertips on the resources she might need more than me. I would want to check with her first to be sure it was all right."

"Sure, Sam, I'd be glad to do that."

Sam saw the woman who had come to him with the battering problem at church the next Sunday.

"Sarah, good to see you today. How are things going?" He pulled her to the side of the church patio where there was some privacy.

"Well, pretty good right now pastor."

"I'm glad to hear that. Since I last talked with you I've been informing myself about wife-beating. I learned that there is a woman in our church, Betty Brown, who has had experience in dealing with women in your situation. I wondered if it would be OK for me to give her your name. She could call you and arrange a time to visit with you."

"Well.... if she could come during the day when my husband is at work. He doesn't like strangers around when he is home."

"I'll tell her that. You can set a time that is best for you."

"Then that would be OK."

Sam gave Sarah's name to Betty and asked to meet with her after she had visited with Sarah.

"Betty, how was the visit with Sarah?"

"Just fine, Sam. She was a little nervous at first, because she didn't know me. I told her what I did on the hot line and that I wanted to be her friend. I asked her to tell me a little about herself. She and her husband and two small children have been here three years and she still feels lost and unconnected. They are away from their families and he is immersed in his work and very tense. He has beaten her several times and it is getting worse and she is very frightened. He won't go for counseling and she doesn't know what to do. She does not want to leave him. She did agree to get together with me again."

"Good work, Betty. I'm glad you made a continuing contact with Sarah. Perhaps we can strategize some ways to help her."

"I'd like that Sam. I'm not sure just how to support Sarah in the church situation. One thing I do know, it's important for her to make her own decisions. On the

hot line we give resources to women who call. Just what resources do we have here at the church?"

"Well, we have a young mothers' support group that meets one morning a week with child care provided. There are some Bible studies and personal growth classes. We have the married couples class. Is her husband interested at all in church?"

"It seems that her husband is striving very hard in his career and just collapses on the week end."

"Let's not forget him. Perhaps one of the couples in their age group might contact them."

"I'd wait on that for now, Sam. I want to be sensitive to how Sarah feels about that. I wouldn't want to antagonize him and make it more difficult for her. If he comes to church, then we will have a good reason to contact him."

"Good thinking, Betty. Let's begin by getting her some personal support. If you can continue to visit her regularly and try to get her plugged in with other women, that will be a good start."

"Yes, Sam, and I will see how open she is to other options. There is a battered woman's support group that is ongoing at the center and I know of an Assertion Training class that the Green Street Counseling Center is offering. I will see if she is interested in either one of those."

"Betty, there is one other thing I was thinking

about. I have been learning that there are many, many women who are being abused that we don't know about. Sarah was one that asked for help. What can we do about those others?"

"Sam, I've been thinking about this too, since I've talked to Sarah. I've been thinking we need to get some more helpers trained and aware of the problems of battered women. The shelter is going to be starting a new hotline training. I'd like to publicize it in the church newsletter. Maybe if we start talking about battered women, more might make their needs known."

"That sounds like a great idea, Betty. Would you write an announcement for the newsletter, and maybe an article about battered women?"

"I'd be glad to, Sam."

"Good, Betty, were off to a good start." Let's get together next month and see where we can go from here."

Counseling the Battered Woman

Much of the counseling done in the church setting is begun on an informal basis. It may be a conversation after church, or a class, or a committee meeting. A woman may ask for advice on how to handle a tough home situation. You might invite her into your office to discuss the situation more thoroughly. If the problem is marital, you can ask if her husband has ever hit her. If the problem is with the

children, you can ask about violence toward them and then question violence toward her. Express your concern about the violence and the seriousness of it. Offer help in the form of resources and referral.

Referral is best for the battered woman for she needs specialized help which most pastors are not trained to give.⁶ A woman basically has two choices, to stay in the relationship, or to leave it. If she decides to leave, she will need a lawyer who has had experience dealing with domestic violence cases. She may want or need a counselor. The best kind of counselor would be a woman with a raised consciousness and experience in dealing with battered women, but she may now be aware that she needs such a person. She may need some career counseling. If the woman chooses to stay in the relationship and wants the battering to stop, she will need to have her husband in couple therapy. In this case she will need a counselor who has had experience in dealing with battering couples. Traditional therapy, individual or couple, will not work. She may not be able to get her husband into therapy with her, but still wants to remain in the marriage. She may want or need counseling for herself.

Your role as pastor will be that of pastoral care, i.e., being a support person and advocate to the battered woman while she is getting specialized help. When you refer her to a specialist, ask her to call you to report on how

the referral is working out, or follow up with a call of your own. Ask what she would prefer, for some women do not want anyone calling their homes for fear of what their jealous husbands might do.

As pastor you need to maintain contact with the battered woman and help maintain or find a connection for her somewhere in the church. This may be recommending groups or classes or organizations in the church, or by sending a laywoman from a pastoral care team⁷ that is familiar with the situation of battered women. It is important to check with the battered woman before sending some one to call on her. Reassure her of the continued support of the church. Check with her to see how she is doing with the referral you gave her.

It may be necessary to counsel a battered woman individually in some instances. You may have been able to establish a relationship of trust so that she may be willing to share her story with you. Here are some guidelines:

1. Hear and understand the woman's situation; uncover abuse; recognize panic and fear. Take seriously her assessment of the life-threatening situation and the potential danger to her from her husband's violence. Do not discount her fears that he may try to kill her if she leaves, or if she stays she may end up dead.

2. Listen without blaming the victim. Believe what the woman has to say. Hear her story. Beware of the

temptation to think she is exaggerating. It is an important passage for her to break the silence by telling you what is happening to her. Telling the story is embarrassing for her, so you may be assured that she is not exaggerating.

3. Confront her with the reality of the situation, i.e., she can't "make him stop," neither can you. She can declare that she will leave if he does it again, or that she will not come back until he does get help.

4. Encourage her to find a "safe" place for herself if she is in physical danger. A safe place could be with a friend or relative, the shelter, a motel, or a church-family refuge.

5. Offer the woman alternatives from which to choose. Her vision may be so clouded from a life of abuse that she may not be able to see her options. Some of these options may be individual counseling, career counseling, support groups, education, help for the batterer, separation, divorce, or legal aid or counsel.

6. Support her decisions and choice of action even though her movement may seem slow. Beware of your tendency to want to rescue the woman. It is imperative for her to make her own choices, whether to stay or to leave, and how to do it.

7. Help her discover and develop her own resources: money, friends, relatives, employment, stress reduction. Encourage her to make contact with the nearest shelter for

their resources.

8. Confront what is happening to any children who are involved in this relationship. Are they being abused by her husband or her? Does she want this kind of future for them? Sometimes thinking about the welfare of the children can be a motivation for the woman to take action.

9. Have as an goal to transfer her as quickly as possible to a woman counselor or lay helper or a women's group who can give her the support she needs to deal with her situation.

10. Maintain contact by checking with her periodically to see how she is doing and offer more information on resources.

In counseling a battered woman it is important to help her cope with her feelings of guilt, anxiety, and anger. Lenore Walker has some concrete helpful suggestions:

1. Guilt: Help her express her guilt by having her recount the details of battering incidents in which she could not stop her own battering. It is essential to confirm society's lack of adequate help for her, but at the same time be encouraging about the potential for change.
2. Anxiety: Control of anxiety may be accomplished through relaxation training, hypnosis, or recommending that the battered woman join a health club so as to focus on positive body feelings. The one area over which the battered woman does have total control is that of her body. She has usually developed a lack of body awareness in order not to feel the real pain of her battering. So, it is important for her to begin to build self-esteem and a sense of power through body exercise.
3. Anger: Encourage the battered woman to recognize and experience anger each time it occurs. The difference between feeling anger and expressing it must be clearly understood. It does no good to express her anger to her

batterer. It usually gets her another beating. She needs to be taught to feel her anger, control it, and utilize it to be assertive about what she wants to do with her life, with or without her batterer.⁸

In dealing with the grief of a battered woman, it is important to remember that she has lost what "ought to have been" rather than what was. Her husband has been beating her and she has overlooked it, hoping the situation will become better. When she recognizes it will not become better, she gives up her dream of a certain kind of life. The grief process is coming to terms with what really was and making plans for a new life. Encourage her to tell her story and accept the greatness of her loss, not discounting it because "she really didn't have it." Support her in making plans for a new life. Keep asking her what she wants to do, recognizing that it is very scary for her to launch out into new ventures. The grief will be real whether she leaves a relationship or stays. In either case she will be dealing with the question, what will I do with my life if he never changes.⁹

Don Parkes had asked one of his new parishioners to head a Children's Sub-Committee of the Christian Education Committee. A few days later she came to his office almost in tears and asked to see him.

"Barbara, you seem upset, how can I help?"

"Oh, pastor, I won't be able to chair the subcommittee. Ben just had a fit when I told him I was going to do it. I feel so terrible that I am letting you

down. I so wanted to take the job."

"I'm sure I can find someone else to take the job. I am concerned about you. Tell me more about what happened. Don noticed that Barbara had on a long sleeved blouse when it was a very hot day."

"Well, Ben came home late Friday night and had been drinking - he's been doing more of that lately. He was in a terrible mood and I tried to cheer him up by telling him what I had been doing. I told him about the committee and he got so angry. He said I had no right to take that job without getting his permission. That I didn't have time to do that. He was really in a rage."

"Did he hit you."

"Well, yes, but he had been drinking, and I guess I should have waited for him be in a better mood before I told him."

"Barbara, you are not responsible for him hitting you. Has he done it before?"

"Yes, several times, but only when he's been drinking."and he feel so badly afterwards."

"How badly are you hurt."

"I just have some bruises on my arms where he punched me."

"Barbara, It looks like you are being battered by your husband. I've been doing some studying about battering lately. I'd like to tell you some of the things I have

learned. Would that be OK."

"I've heard about that but I didn't think of myself as....Yes, I'd like to know if there is anything I can do to get Ben to stop."

"This is something that happens to a lot of people. I have some bad news and some good news. The bad news is that if nothing is done it tends to get worse. The good news is that it can be stopped if both of you get help. Do you think you can get Ben to go for counseling."

"He is not crazy about counsellors, but I might get him to come with me to talk to you."

"That is a good beginning. I'll wait to hear from you either way."

Crisis Counseling

You may receive a call from a woman who has just been beaten and is in a crisis situation, asking for help. Here are some guidelines.

1. Do not go to the home when there is violence occurring. It is dangerous. Offer to call the police for the woman.

2. Ask if she is safe. Does she need medical attention? Where are her children? When will the husband be coming back? Encourage her to find a "safe" place for herself if she is in physical danger.

3. Does she want to leave? Where can she go?

Explore the possibilities with her: parents, friends, church-family refuge, motel, shelter. If the shelter is the only option, then give her the number for the shelter hot line.

4. Encourage her to make contact with her nearest shelter for support no matter what she may decide to do.

Guidelines for Couple Counseling

Because of the specialized training and awareness involved in counseling a battering couple, it is best to refer the couple for couple counseling. It may be necessary for each separately to have individual counseling or group counseling through agencies such as batterers anonymous and a battered woman's support group. If you are, for some reason, involved in short term counseling, here are some guidelines.

1. Beware of buying into the excuses and seductions of the batterer. This is very easy to do, especially if he is one of your parishioners and highly respected.

2. Confront the violence, both physical and psychological. It cannot continue if the relationship is to be healed.

3. Help each to recognize and be responsible for his/her own anger. Move to constructive ways to deal with anger.

4. Ask about influences which may be contributing to

the violent situation such as alcohol, drugs, stress, and belief systems. Give names of resources such as: Alcoholics Anonymous, coping with stress classes, biofeedback, exercise classes and groups, and assertion training classes.

5. Help the couple set individual and joint goals for themselves.

6. Lift up images of justice for the couple to consider in making a new marriage contract. Does each have opportunity for career development? Does each have opportunity for free time for oneself? Do each contribute to household chores and child care? If this is the major task of the wife, is that valued? Do each have a say in how the money is spent?

7. Help the couple learn to express their feelings, hopes, dreams, hurts to each other in nonviolent, straightforward ways. Suggest assertion training classes.

8. One or both members of the couple may want or need to have separate individual group or individual counseling. Be aware and make support and encourage this desire. Locate resources for the husband such as Batterer's Anonymous and for the wife through the local women's shelter.

9. Help the couple get connected with others in the church so that they begin to establish a community for themselves.

Here are some suggestions from Janet Geller's work

with couples:

1. Get the woman to bring her husband in for the first session so they both start on an equal basis with the counselor. This act on the part of the woman is the first step in changing her battering situation. If she can get her husband to come, she is no longer victim.

2. Break the blame/guilt cycle by making clear to the husband that he is responsible for his own violence.

3. Encourage each to express how each feels about the violence. How does he feel when he hits her. How does she feel being beaten. Make sure each gets "heard out" intervening if necessary to make sure it happens.

Let's return to the case of Pastor Don Parkes.

The next day Barbara called Don to say that Ben had agreed to see him with Barbara, just once.

"Ben, Barbara, so glad you could come."

"Hello, pastor."

"Well, I didn't think it could hurt, just once. Barbara said you might have some help for us."

"Yes, Ben, I am concerned about the violence that happened the other night when Barbara told you about her committee job."

"She had no right to take that without my permission and anyway I had been drinking."

"Maybe she should have consulted you, but that is not an excuse for hitting."

"Well....I guess not. But I had been drinking, and I didn't quite know what I was doing. I never hit her when I am sober."

"So if you have been drinking, that gives you permission to hit?"

"I see your point."

"Barbara, is it accurate that Ben only hits you when he has been drinking?"

"Yes, that's right."

"Ben, I have been learning more about this kind of problem lately and I think I have some information that might help you and Barbara. Would you like to do something about it?"

"Yes, I would. I feel so terrible when I hit her, but I get so angry at her I just don't know what to do."

"Ben, Barbara, there are several ways you could begin to work on this problem together. Let me lay them out and you can go home and think about what you would like to do."

"OK."

"OK."

"I have the names of several good counselors who have done work with couples with this problem and they have been helped. There is also a group called Batterers Anonymous for you, Ben. and a support group at the Shelter for battered women for you, Barbara. You might consider

Alcoholics Anonymous for your drinking problem, Ben."

"Couldn't we just meet with you, pastor?"

"I feel complimented that you would ask me, Barbara, but unfortunately my responsibilities here at the church don't allow me to meet more than a few times with anyone. I would like you to have help for as long as you need it from a person experienced in dealing with spouse abuse. What I like to do is plan with you what course of action would be best. I'll keep in contact with you to see how things are going and support you in any other way I can. There is another couple in the church that has used the counselor, David Cramer. Maybe they would be willing to talk with you about their experience."

"Well, I don't like airing our dirty linen in public. It's OK for you to know Pastor. but I don't want anyone else knowing."

"I can appreciate that, Ben. How about you and Barbara talking over what you'd like to do and we get together next week."

"OK."

"OK."

"Just one thing before you go. The violence must stop before you can build a better marriage. I have a suggestion to help you make that happen. Ben, if you feel that you are getting so angry that you might hit, you leave the house for one half hour. And Barbara, if you think he

is going to hit you, and he doesn't leave, you leave. Fair enough? "

"I think I can do that."

"Yes, that's fine."

Pastoral Care for Psychologically Abused Women

The pastor may encounter the woman who is a victim of psychological abuse in a variety of settings, including that she may be significantly involved in lay ministry in the church. The church contributes to her growth and support. Her continued personal growth may precipitate a crisis in her relationship with her abuser if she begins to want to make changes. It will be important for the pastor to be able to suggest an adequate therapist for couples or individual counseling, or legal counseling in case of divorce. These counselors must be aware that the battered-wife syndrome exists in instances of long term psychological abuse.

Marge had made an appointment with pastor Al Walker. She and her husband Morris had been long time parishioners active in the church. When she came into the office she looked pale and shaken.

"Pastor, I just don't know what to do. Morris has left without a word."

"Tell me about it, Marge."

"I just got a job last week at his encouragement and

when I came home from work Friday he was gone with his clothes. After 27 years and three children I just don't understand it. I tried to call him at work and he said he wasn't coming back. I feel so helpless, so worthless. What can I do? I was thinking that now that he has just finished his Master's Degree and got that promotion that things would be better and we could have some time together. Now he's left without a word. I can't support myself on the little job I have. I was lucky to get that clerking job in the first place. I haven't worked full time since our first child was born. He's got that good management job at the Acme Company, and I worked so hard to support him. It isn't fair. I don't want to be poor all my life. Now what do I do?!"

"Remember, Marge that everything you and Morris have built together in the past 27 years is half yours and he does have a responsibility to support you while you develop a career."

"But that takes time and I don't have money for a lawyer. How can I make the house payments? I don't know anything about the financial matters. Morris kept that all to himself and didn't want me to know anything about it. He doesn't want to talk to me."

"Marge, I can see that you are in a real crisis right now, and it's hard to see clearly. I would like to suggest a woman counselor I know that can help you through

this period."

"I would like that and I'm sure it would be helpful, but I can't afford expensive counseling. I don't know how I'm going to pay the bills."

"I would like to make contact with Morris, if that's all right with you, Marge. I will encourage him in his responsibility to support you in this transition."

"I would like that, Al. Anything you can do will be helpful. He won't talk to me."

"OK. I will see if I can talk to Morris and let's make another appointment for you to see me."

"Al was able to talk with Morris. Morris was afraid that Marge and Al would try to talk him into going back. Al respected his right to leave, but encouraged him to remember his responsibility to Marge and their teen age son who still needed financial support. Al suggested a joint meeting to discuss the immediate financial situation and future financial arrangements. Morris was open to that. He just didn't want to be talked into going back. He wanted to be free. Marge had been getting too independent for him and he wanted out.

Further conversation with Marge revealed that the marriage had been one of neglect and verbal abuse on the part of Morris. The verbal abuse had the effect of diminishing her self esteem. After some reflection, Marge was able to see that the marriage was mostly hopes for

something better. Her real major loss was financial security. Her fears were that she could not make it financially. She needed career counseling and emotional and financial support during her time of transition. Al's task was to use his influence with Morris to encourage him to cooperate with supporting Marge willingly without costly and time consuming court orders. He helped Marge get involved in a singles group and kept contact with her to see how she was progressing.

Pastoral Care for Batterers and Abusers

Lenore Walker has listed some characteristics that may help us identify a potential batterer:

1. Does a man report having been physically or psychologically abused as a child?
2. Was the man's mother battered by his father?
3. Has the man been known to display violence against other people?
4. Does he play with guns and use them to protect himself against other people?
5. Does he lose his temper frequently and more easily than seems necessary?
6. Does he commit acts of violence against objects and things rather than people?
7. Does he drink alcohol excessively?
8. Does he display an unusual amount of jealousy when his wife is not with him? Is he jealous of significant other people in her life?
9. Does he expect his wife to spend all of her free time with him or to keep him informed of her whereabouts?
10. Does he become enraged when his wife does not listen to his advice?
11. Does he appear to have a dual personality.
12. Is there a sense of overkill in his cruelty or in his kindness?
13. Does his wife get a sense of fear when he becomes angry with her? Does not making him angry become an important part of her behavior?
14. Does he have rigid ideas of what people should do

that are determined by male or female sex-role stereotypes?

15. Does the woman think or feel she is being battered? If so, the probability is high that she is a battered woman and should seek help immediately.¹⁰

Although the focus of this paper has been on battered women, I want to say a few words about pastoral care of the men involved in the lives of the women we are concerned about. Most battered women do not want to leave their husbands. Most will want the battering and abuse to stop. You, as pastor, will be in contact with many of these men for they are active or attending the church. Planning programs specifically to help men during this period in history of tremendous changes in roles will encourage the changes necessary for peaceful lives. Men need to be conscious of and learn to express their feelings in ways that are not abusive. Support groups, men's retreats, and men's study groups apart from women will help. Important subjects are intimacy, power, conflict resolution, role changes, and feelings. You can refer men to such organizations as Batterers Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous if there is a drinking problem. If you are a male pastor you can be a role model to live out different ways of relating to woman than by using power and coerciveness. You can acknowledge your own sexism and cultural conditioning and invite men to join you on a journey to new way of living. If you are a female pastor you can also be a role model of an assertive woman in the way you relate to the men in your church.¹¹

Dealing with Belief Systems:

As was discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, we are aware that the battered woman and her batterer are characterized by having rigid belief systems based on sex role stereotypes. When these beliefs have the sanction of God, or so the couple thinks, these beliefs are even more powerful. As pastor, you have authority given by the church members to, in a sense, represent God. In relation to the battering couple this authority can be used for challenging belief systems that keep the couple locked into their violent relationship.

One way to begin to effect a change is to offer alternative beliefs when you hear one that keeps a woman in bondage. Here are some suggestions on how to encounter them directly.

"But I made a promise to God for better or worse when I married him."

"That promise was also made by him too. Marriage is a partnership. If he is unwilling to work on a better relationship, perhaps God will free you from that vow."

"But isn't divorce a sin?"

"Marriage as an institution is supposed to be for the good of the people in it. God is more concerned about the persons involved in the marriage than in the marriage itself." Recall Jesus and the Sabbath. (Mark 2:23-28)

"But if I pray for him, won't God change him?"

"God cannot change anyone who does not want to change. I will pray for courage for you to carry out what you decide to do."

"If I leave him, then I will be taking the children away from their father. They need their father."

"What the children need most of all is supportive parents. Living in this violence is diminishing you so that you cannot be an effective mother. His violence is destructive to the whole family. God's design is peace and wholeness."

"Aren't we as Christians called to suffer? Isn't this just my cross to bear?"

"It is true that some Christians are called to suffer at certain times in history, usually when they are being persecuted in large groups. Women are not called to suffer at the hands of their husbands, especially now that we have laws to protect them and resources for them to be safe. God calls you to be free from bondage."

"Doesn't God care about my suffering? How long do I have to put up with this abuse?"

"God cares very much about your suffering and has provided ways out." Recall the story of the Exodus, God freeing the slaves in Egypt.

"If I leave I will be all alone. We as God's people will stand by you and support you. God has promised you new life through Christ." (1 Cor. 5:17)

By informing yourself of the situation of abused woman and the resources available, you as pastor can be prepared to offer help and support to the battered woman in the church. You can educate the whole church to an awareness of her problem and encourage the church to reach out in help and support. You can give direct help to the battered woman by encouraging support groups, referral to adequate professionals and personal counseling.

END NOTES

1. See Derald W. Sue, Counseling the Culturally Different: Theory and Practice, Chapter 4, "Dimensions of World Views: Cultural Identity" (New York: Wiley, 1981)
2. Del Martin, Battered Wives (San Francisco: Glide, 1976) A history of domestic violence in the context of sexism and patriarchy.
3. Kathleen and James McGinnis, Parenting for Peace and Justice (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1981) A seven week Leader's Guide is with worksheets is also available. It includes an excellent chapter on sex-role stereotyping.
4. Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., Growth Counseling for Marriage Enrichment: Pre-Marriage and the Early Years (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975) especially Chapter 2, "The Intentional Marriage Method - A Basic Growth Tool," and Chapter 4, "Preparing for a Good Marriage."
5. Letty Cottim Pogrebin, Growing Up Free: Raising Your Child in the 80's (New York: Harper & Row, 1979)
6. Howard W. Stone, The Caring Church: A Guide for Lay Pastoral Care (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983) 89-93. Concrete suggestions for referral in general.
7. Ibid. This is an excellent guide for a lay training program. Diane Detwiler-Zapp and William Caveness Dixon, Lay Caregiving (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982)
8. Lenore E. Walker, The Battered Woman (New York: Harper & Row, 1979) 238-39.
9. Wayne E. Oates, Pastoral Care and Counseling in Grief and Separation (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976) Phyllis R. Silverman, Chapter 5, "The Grief of Battered Women," in Helping Women Cope with Grief (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1981)
10. Walker, 254.
11. R. E. Alberti and M. L. Emmons, Your Perfect Right: A Guide to Assertive Behavior (San Luis Obispo, CA: Impact, 1970) David Augsburger, Anger and Assertiveness in Pastoral Care (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979) David Augsburger and John Faul, Beyond Assertiveness (Waco, TX: Word, 1980) Seattle-King County NOW, Woman, Assert Your Self! An Instructive Handbook (New York: Harper & Row, 1974)

SUMMARY: THE EXODUS JOURNEY

How long , O God must I endure this bondage, this abuse?
Not long. I see your bondage. I feel your pain. I will
lead you out. My people shall be free.

But God I do not want to leave. I am afraid to leave. I
have a nice home here. What about the children? It will be
hard for them. We can't leave.
I will lead you out. I have a good place for you to go. I
have a land flowing with milk and honey.

The passage is very difficult, very scary. I'm afraid I
will drown.
I will hold back the waters. I will lead you.

How will I survive in this wilderness?
I will provide food and satisfy your thirst.

I do not know where I am going. I want to go back.
You must not turn back now. I will lead you. I will guide
you.

I am afraid. At least there was some security back there in
bondage. At least I knew how it was even though I was not
free.
I will lead you to a new place of freedom. I will guide
you.

I am so alone. Who will care for me?
I have those along the way who will care for you and support
you.

I'm afraid, but I will go on. I've gone too far to turn
back now.
I will lead you. It won't be long now. You will be free.

What's that I see on the horizon? A new land across the
river? A new place to be, to become? I have been without a
land for so long.
That is the new place of freedom for you. I will lead you.
I will guide you. You are almost there. Keep going.

(R. L. Clarke, 1984)

Let us as pastors be "those along the way" as ministers of
care and support on this journey.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: FEMINIST AND LIBERATION RESOURCES

- Chesler, Phyllis. Women and Madness. New York: Avon, 1972. Critique on the negative effects of the psychotherapeutic field on women.
- Christ, Carol P., and Judith Plaskow, eds. Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979. Collection of articles from feminist theologians and scholars.
- Clinebell, Charlotte Holt. Counseling for Liberation. Creative Pastoral Care and Counseling Series, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976.
- Cone, James. God of the Oppressed. New York: Seabury, 1975. Key work on black liberation theology.
- Daly, Mary. Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation. Boston: Beacon, 1973. Key work on radical feminism.
- Franks, V., and V. Burtie, eds. Women in Therapy. New York: Bruner/Mazel, 1974. Comprehensive collection of articles on the subject.
- Freire, Paulo. Pedagogy of the Oppressed. New York: Continuum, 1982. Key work from South American perspective.
- Gilbert, Lucia Albino. "Feminist Therapy," in Annette M. Brodsky and Rachel Hare-Mustin, eds. Women and Psychotherapy. New York: Guilford, 1980, 245-65.
- Miller, Jean Baker. Toward A New Psychology of Women. Boston: Beacon, 1976. Looks at the valuable contributions women make to society (nurture, care).
- Mander, Anica Vesel, and Anne Kent Rush. Feminism as Therapy. New York: Random House/Berkeley: Bookworks, 1974. A constructive model of therapy.
- Russell, Letty. Human Liberation in a Feminist Perspective: A Theology. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974. Feminism from biblical and Reformed position.
- Scanzoni, Letha, and Nancy Hardesty. All We're Meant To Be: A Biblical Approach to Women's Liberation. Waco, TX: Word, 1974. A biblical feminist point of view.
- Walker, Lenore E. The Battered Woman. New York: Harper & Row, 1979. Her major work from a feminist perspective.

APPENDIX B: RESOURCES

Organizations

Center for Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, 1914 34th Street, Suite 205, Seattle, WA 98103.

Center for Women Policy Studies, 2000 P Street, N. W., Suite 508, Washington, DC 20036.

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 1728 "N" Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Manuals

Fortune, Marie, and Denise Hormann. Family Violence: A Workshop Manual for Clergy and Other Service Providers. Center for Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, 1914 N. 34th Street, Suite 205, Seattle, WA 98103. 121 pp, \$15.00.

NiCarthy, Ginny. Getting Free: A Handbook for Women in Abusive Relationships. Seattle, WA: Seal, 1982.

Sonkin, Daniel J. Learning to Live Without Violence: A Handbook for Men. San Francisco: Volcano, 1982.

Newsletters

Response to Family Violence and Sexual Assault. A publication of the Center for Women Policy Studies, 2000 P. Street, N. W., Suite 508, Washington, DC 20036. \$30.00 for 6 issues. Information on medical, social service, legal and legislative developments in the family violence field.

Working Together to Prevent Sexual and Domestic Violence. Bi-monthly publication of the Center for Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, 1914 N 34th Street, Suite 205, Seattle, WA 98103. Useful resource information for church community.

Media

Time Out. Series of three short films on spouse abuse, seen through the eyes of men. 16mm, color, 12 to 18 min. each. Available through ODN Productions, 74 Varick Street, New York, NY 10013.

To Have and to Hold. A film about men who batter women. 16mm., color, 20 min. New Day Films, P.O. Box 315, Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417.

We Will Not Be Beaten. Produced by women who have themselves been battered, telling their own stories. 16mm, black and white, 35 min. Transition House Films, 25 West Street, Fifth Floor, Boston, MA 02111.

Denominational Materials

Each denomination has materials on battered woman and domestic violence. Take advantage of the resources of your own denomination.

APPENDIX C: WORSHIP AIDS

Primary Resource

Watley, William D., ed. The Word and Words: Beyond Gender in Theological and Liturgical Language. Princeton, NJ: Consultation on Church Union, 1983.

General Resources

Clark, Linda, Marian Ronan, and Eleanor Walker. Image Breaking, Image Building: A Handbook for Creative Worship With Women of Christian Tradition. New York: Pilgrim, 1981.

Emswiler, Sharon Neuffer, and Thomas Neuffer Emswiler. Women and Worship: A Guide to Non-Sexist Hymns, Prayers, and Liturgies. New York: Harper & Row, 1974.

_____. Wholeness in Worship: Creative Models for Sunday, Family, and Special Services. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980.

Gjerding, Iben, and Katherine Kinnamon, eds. No Longer Strangers: A Resource for Women and Worship. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1983.

Hinton, Pat Corrick. Images of Peace. Minneapolis: Winston, 1984.

Sawicki, Marianne. Faith and Sexism: Guidelines for Religious Educators. New York: Seabury, 1979.

Watkins, Keith. Faithful and Fair: Transcending Sexist Language in Worship. Nashville: Abingdon, 1981.

Weems, Ann. Reaching for Rainbows: Resources for Creative Worship. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1980.

Withers, Barbara. Language About God in Liturgy and Scripture: A Study Guide. Philadelphia: Geneva, 1980.

Lectionary Aids

Hessel, Deiter, ed. Social Themes of the Christian Year: A

Commentary on the Lectionary. Philadelphia: Geneva, 1983.

An Inclusive Language Lectionary: Readings for Year A. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983.

Kirk James G. When We Gather: A Book of Prayers for Worship, Year A. Philadelphia: Geneva, 1983.

The Service for the Lord's Day: Supplemental Liturgical Resource 1. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984.

Music

Duck, Ruth C., and Michael G. Bausch, eds. Everflowing Streams: Songs for Worship. New York: Pilgrim, 1981.

Emswiler, Sharon and Tom, eds. Sisters and Brothers Sing! second ed. Normal, IL: Wesley Foundation Campus Ministry, 1977.

Huber, Jane Parker. Fresh Words to Familiar Tunes. New York: United Presbyterian Women, 1982.

Lodge, Ann, compiler. Creation Sings. Philadelphia: Geneva, 1979.

Sermon Aids

Fiorenza, Elisabeth Schüssler. In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins. New York: Crossroad, 1983.

Miller, Casey, and Kate Swift. The Handbook of Nonsexist Writing. New York: Harper & Row, 1980.

Mollenkott, Virginia Ramey. The Divine Feminine: The Biblical Imagery of God as Female. New York: Crossroad, 1983.

Russell, Letty M., ed. The Liberating Word: A Guide to Nonsexist Interpretation of the Bible. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976.

Stagg, Evelyn and Frank. Woman in the World of Jesus. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978.

Swidler, Leonard. Biblical Affirmations of Woman. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1979.

Trible, Phyllis. God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality.
Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978.

Wilson-Kastner, Patricia. Faith, Feminism, and the Christ.
Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983.

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